

Anti-mafia judge killed in blast

PALERMO (AP) — A top anti-mafia judge and at least five other people were killed Sunday in a car bombing in a suburb of Palermo, Sicily, police said. The judge, Giovanni Falcone, was a symbol of Italy's victories against the mafia in the mid-1980s, was slain on May 23 when explosives ripped apart a stretch of highway outside Palermo as his armored limousine drove past. Mr. Falcone headed the investigation that led to the 1986 trial of 474 mafia suspects. Hundreds were convicted of various crimes that ranged from ordering assassinations to drug-related charges. Mr. Borsellino and Mr. Falcone close friends and worked together on mafia investigations, including the 1986 "maxi-trial," said Mr. Borsellino was considered by many to be the heir of Mr. Falcone.

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Yemen, S. Arabia to discuss border dispute

SANAA (R) — A Yemeni delegation headed for Geneva on Sunday for talks with Saudi Arabia on a dispute over an oil-rich border region which has soured relations between the two neighbors. Officials said the talks in Geneva on Monday would deal with trying to agree on the time and venue for holding official negotiations. "The meeting is a preliminary one to exchange ideas on the arrangements to start negotiations between the two countries on different issues... mainly the Yemeni-Saudi border," Yemen's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Abdul Aziz Al Dali, heading the team to Geneva, told the Yemeni News Agency. There was no word from Saudi Arabia on the Geneva meeting. The talks would be the first over the long-standing border dispute which flared up earlier this year between the two countries jeopardizing oil company exploration in Yemen. Yemen has said that Saudi claims that the oil-rich areas of Hadramout, Ma'arib and Al Jawf were part of its territory made it necessary to discuss the border issue as soon as possible. Relations between the two countries, already strained by Sanaa's pro-Iraqi stance during the Gulf crisis, deteriorated in April when Riyadh warned Western oil companies against exploring in areas it considered Saudi territory.

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Guerrillas hit Israeli position

NABATIYEH, Lebanon, (R) — Guerrillas rocketed a hilltop post commanded by Israeli forces in their South Lebanon "security zone" on Sunday, security sources said. They said a big explosion was heard when at least one rocket hit a concentration of Israeli troops and military vehicles in Addabshah hill on the zone's western edge overlooking the town of Nabatiyeh outside the strip. There was no immediate report of casualties in the attack.

U.S. team cancels visit to Somalia

NAIROBI (AP) — A U.S. government delegation cancelled a visit to Somalia's beleaguered capital because of fears for their safety, the U.S. embassy said Sunday. Republican Senator Nancy Kassebaum and James Kunder, head of the U.S. Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, are leading the delegation. "The reports we received over the last twenty four hours led us to believe the senator should not go to Mogadishu," said embassy spokesman Thomas J. Dowling. He did not elaborate and U.N. officials in Mogadishu could not be reached for comment.

Pakistan military gets more powers

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The government on Sunday expanded the military's powers to restore order in Sindh province, which has been ravaged by 10 years of ethnic and political violence, the state news agency reported. President Ghulam Ishaq Khan amended the country's criminal code to let the armed forces search, seize weapons and arrest suspects. Those powers had been used only by police. The civilian government ordered an army crackdown in late May to try to curb the spiralling wave of kidnappings, theft and murder in the southern province.

Detained Israelis just technicians — Congo

BRAZZAVILLE (R) — Three Israelis whose arrest with bullet-proof vests, detonators and military radios prompted speculation about mercenary dirty tricks on Congo's bumpy road to democracy, were hired to repair a broadcasting system, military President Denis Sassou-Nguesso's office announced. "The presidency defies anyone to prove that this equipment was of a dangerous and military nature," Sassou-Nguesso's office said in a statement released on Saturday night. Israel said they were security consultants. "They are connected to a private company advising on security. There is no (Israeli) government involvement," a spokeswoman for the Israeli foreign ministry said on Sunday. "They are still under arrest and checks are being made about the possibility of their release."

Group behind Kuwait bombings said held

KUWAIT (R) — A Kuwaiti newspaper said on Sunday Arab members of a gang behind several bomb attacks in Kuwait city this year had been arrested. Al Rai Al Am quoted an Interior Ministry source as saying all the members of the gang were non-Kuwaiti Arabs and that more details would be made available soon. "The members of this gang have been discovered. They are not Kuwaitis," the source said, according to the Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) which carried excerpts of the newspaper's report.

Djibouti says rebels broke ceasefire

DJIBOUTI (R) — Rebels opened fire on Djibouti army positions near the northern town of Obock early on Sunday, breaking a ceasefire in force since February. A military communiqué said there were no casualties among government troops and that the rebels from the Front for the Restoration of Unity and Democracy (FRUD) were forced to flee. It was the first reported violation since a ceasefire was mediated by France, the former colonial power, on Feb. 28.

Baker says Rabin is serious about halting settlement

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker met Israel's new Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Sunday and said he would tell Arab leaders Mr. Rabin was serious about limiting Jewish settlement in occupied lands. Mr. Baker, reviving his search for Middle East peace, told reporters after a 90-minute one-on-one meeting: "I am quite confident that we will be able to make the point with the Arab countries and Arab representatives that I will be sitting down with them and we now have a government that is serious about limiting this question with respect to settlement activity."

Mr. Baker arrived hours after the government suspended fresh Jewish settlements pending further study.

Mr. Baker appealed to Arabs to match Mr. Rabin's conciliatory moves. But Mr. Baker also told reporters he was not ready to recommend that President George Bush approve housing loan guarantees for Israel until he finds out more about the new government's plans to halt settle-

ments. Mr. Baker was to meet Mr. Rabin both Sunday and Monday. The cabinet's decision was immediately attacked by right-wing politicians, including former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir. He warned that "freezing construction, freezing settlements on lands in (the West Bank) — the meaning is giving up parts of greater Israel without negotiations, before negotiations, in exchange for money."

Mr. Baker said the United States "would like to get a clear understanding of what the new government's exact plans are. I think it's important we have that discussion before I start laying down markers here and there."

Mr. Baker went out of his way to praise Mr. Rabin's moves towards peace.

"The new Israeli government creates some new possibilities to transform the peace negotiations," Mr. Baker said. When he took office, Mr. Rabin pledged not to "lose precious time" negotiating with Palestinians. His government has said it would suspend contracts for new Jewish settlements.

Mr. Baker, reading a prepared statement to reporters before taking questions aboard his U.S. Air Force jet, said: "We would like to think that we could begin to hear some new and different signals from those on the Arab side."

While setting up Arab-Israeli peace talks last year, Mr. Baker proposed a tradeoff: A suspension of Jewish settlements in exchange for the Arabs ending their economic boycott of businesses that do business with Israel.

Taking a swipe at the departed Likud government, Mr. Baker said: "It's a pleasure to be going to Israel under circumstances in which I anticipate we will not be met with the opening of new settlements, but rather the suspension of contracts for construction of new housing or settlement activity."

The cabinet decision was in stark contrast to past Baker visits when Israel's backed by Mr. Shamir's hardline government would welcome him by erecting a new settlement.

Mr. Baker has described the 115,000 Jews living in settlements

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Algerian power lines sabotaged

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Saboteurs have stepped up attacks on Algeria's power grid in the past few days in a bid to cripple electric supplies, the state utility Sonelgaz said Sunday. "In the last few days, these actions have seen a serious increase... aiming at electrical works of major importance in supplying the country," Sonelgaz said in a statement carried by the official news agency AFS.

The state monopoly's report that at least a dozen power lines had been hit, with cables cut and pylons toppled, came just five days after a military court sentenced two top fundamentalist leaders to 12 years in jail.

The fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), banned on March 4, vowed in a clandestine bulletin this weekend not to abandon its leaders, Abassi Madani, 61, and Ali Belhadj, 35. "The 'Majahedeen' have sworn to reestablish justice and the Islamic state by arms after the tenants of power should give it up, even to those the people democratically chose," the statement said.

Diplomats told Reuters when the court outlawed the FIS in March that they feared the most powerful opposition group would go underground with extremists carrying out "terrorist" attacks. Sonelgaz, in its first public acknowledgment of sabotage, did not say who was responsible but said attacks, initially started last March, had "reached more serious proportions" in the past few days.

State radio on Sunday said unidentified gunmen attacked and badly damaged a radio transmitting station in the eastern city of Constantine. Security forces battled armed fundamentalists Saturday as dozens of arrests were reported throughout the country following widespread, violent protests.

The violence erupted following a call by the FIS for followers to "express by all their means their rejection of the verdict" against the FIS leaders.

Iraq offers to let neutral inspectors into building

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq on Sunday offered to let arms experts from "neutral" countries visit a building where U.N. weapons inspectors have been denied entry for the past two weeks, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) said.

Deputy Prime Minister Tariq Aziz told U.N. envoy Rolf Ekeus that his government was ready to let "experts in the field of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons from non-aligned countries or neutral countries who are members of the U.N. Security Council visit and inspect the Ministry of Agriculture," the news agency said.

On July 5, the government refused to let a U.N. team led by a U.S. army major enter the ministry. Members of the team, who include Russians and Britons, have been maintaining an around-the-clock vigil outside the building ever since.

As Mr. Ekeus wrapped up his mission, more than 1,000 people showed slogans against his team and the United States marched past the ministry.

The demonstration was the biggest against their presence to date.

Mr. Ekeus, executive chairman of a U.N. special commission scrapping Iraq's war machine under the terms of the Gulf war

ceasefire, described as "worthwhile" his meetings in Baghdad. "I would not say it is absolute stalemate," he said.

But when asked whether there was any change in the Iraqi stand, he told reporters: "Fundamentally, there is no change."

Mr. Ekeus arrived in Baghdad on Friday to try to persuade the Iraqis to let the inspectors search the ministry for data on ballistic missiles and other arms programs.

Iraq has so far rejected a U.N. Security Council demand for the inspectors to be granted immediate access to the ministry.

It denies that any military information is stored there and says allowing inspectors inside would infringe its sovereignty.

The INA dispatch did not say how soon an inspection by neutral experts might be possible. It did not mention the names of any nations which might be acceptable to the Baghdad government.

Mr. Ekeus met Foreign Minister Ahmad Hussein al Khudayer after his session with Mr. Aziz, the news agency said.

U.S. State Department spokesman Richard Boucher warned last Thursday that Iraq's refusal to open the ministry to U.N. inspectors was "putting at risk" the ceasefire that ended the Gulf war.

Hundreds injured in violent Kabul clashes

KABUL (Agencies) — Iranian-backed rebels blasted Kabul with gunfire and rockets on Sunday injuring hundreds of people amid attempts by the new Islamic government to evict thousands of guerrillas from the capital.

Hospital officials said more than 400 people, mostly civilians, had been killed or wounded since fighting began late Saturday between Hezb-e-Wahdat, an eight-party coalition of Shiite rebel groups backed by Iran, and pro-government forces.

A spokesman for Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Masoud accused Hezb-e-Wahdat of reneging on an earlier promise to leave the city.

"Hezb-e-Wahdat has agreed to leave the city, but the problem is that it is a collection of groups without a single command," said Abdullah, who like most Afghans, uses only one name.

But Al Raj Masoodi, a Hezb-e-Wahdat spokesman, charged that a rival group of Sunni Muslims opened fire, starting the fighting. There were no reliable figures for the number of people killed but reports from western Kabul spoke of a number of people dying as

rockets smashed through their homes. Most of the fighting appeared to be concentrated in the west of the city where Hezb-e-Wahdat holds sway.

Anti-tank rockets and heavy machine-gun fire reverberated throughout the city. Bursts from dozens of rocket-propelled grenade launchers were heard in impoverished Shiite neighbourhoods in the city.

"The idea is that all armed groups except the police should move outside the city," said General Abdul Momin, who abandoned ousted President Najibullah to help rebel forces win their 14-year war against the communist government.

The minority Shiites are unhappy with the share of power they have been offered but sent representatives to a meeting of the leadership council on Saturday.

A Wahdat source blamed the hardline Sunni Muslim Ittehad-e-Islami for starting the fighting, but other commanders said it began when Shiite fighters refused to leave their bases.



Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker

U.S. secretary could be carrying fresh ideas, Sharif Zeid says

AMMAN — (J.T.) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker could be carrying new American ideas and possible new Israeli ideas to advance the Middle East peace process when he arrives here today for talks with Jordanian leaders, Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker said Sunday.

The visit of the U.S. secretary will also offer an opportunity for Jordan to reiterate its firm position towards peace in the Middle East, the prime minister was quoted as saying in an interview with the French News Agency (AFP).

Sharif Zeid reaffirmed the Jordanian position calling for a total Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, and recognition of

the Palestinian people's rights as the basic conditions for a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

The prime minister said he saw no particular reason for optimism in the peace process with the change in the Israeli government after last month's general elections. Optimism expressed by some parties that the new government headed by Yitzhak Rabin could seek a just and comprehensive peace with the Arabs is premature, Sharif Zeid said.

While Sharif Zeid conceded that the Rabin government could be different from its Likud-led predecessor, he said any judgement of the policies of the new government would have to wait until Arab-Israeli peace talks resume and allow the Israelis the

opportunity to respond positively to peace efforts.

Sharif Zeid rejected Mr. Rabin's classification of Jewish settlements in the occupied territories as "political" and "security" oriented, noting that the Jewish state had started building settlements immediately after occupying the territories in the 1967 war citing "security" needs.

The prime minister said Mr. Rabin's move not to allow funds for new settlements had more to do with Israel's bid to secure \$10 billion in American loan guarantees than the quest for peace since the U.S. had linked the guarantee request to a freeze in Israel's settlement building in the occupied territories.

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Palestinians seek renewed U.S.-PLO dialogue

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Five Palestinian delegates to the Mideast peace talks will today present a memorandum to U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in occupied Jerusalem outlining their demands to speed up the peace process, including a call for the U.S. to resume its dialogue with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), according to well-informed Palestinian sources.

The U.S. suspended its dialogue with the PLO in June 1990 after the PLO refused to condemn an aborted attack, by the Palestine Liberation Front, a PLO faction.

According to the sources in Amman, the Palestinian memo will call on Mr. Baker to accept a wider representation in the Palestinian negotiating delegation to include residents of Jerusalem and representatives from the diaspora, although it will also reiterate commitment to the principles laid down at the opening Mideast peace conference in Madrid last October.

Israel refused to participate in the peace talks unless the Palestinian representation was limited to residents of the occupied West Bank — excluding Jerusalem — and the Gaza Strip. The PLO accepted this formula in order to participate in the negotiations, and the PLO leadership maintained its behind-the-scenes role throughout the several rounds of talks that have taken place since October.

The Palestinian team expected to meet with Mr. Baker will also call on the American officials to use his country's influence as a co-sponsor of the talks on Israel for an immediate and complete freeze on all Jewish settlement activities in the occupied territories.

The peace delegates Mr. Baker is scheduled to meet with this morning at the American consulate in Jerusalem are: chief negotiator Haidar Abdul Shafi, head

of the delegation Faisal Hussein, spokeswoman Hanan Ashrawi, Ghassan Al Khatib and Sami Kilani.

The Palestinian sources told the Jordan Times the memorandum to Mr. Baker will also demand that Israel fully comply with the Geneva conventions, that Mr. Baker receive a commitment from the Israeli government that it adopts "confidence-building measures," such as releasing political prisoners, allowing expelled Palestinians to return home, and to stop violating Palestinian human rights.

"The Palestinian memo will also demand from Mr. Baker his country's commitment to link the interim self-government period to the final solution," said a Palestinian source.

The source reiterated that the final settlement, after the three-year interim period, during which authority is supposed to be transferred to the Palestinians in the occupied territories through legislative elections, was the imple-

mentation of Security Council resolutions 242 and 338.

The Palestinian memo also includes a demand for "comprehensive Palestinian elections to take place as soon as possible and prepare all the necessary measures to guarantee that they be free... and that the Israeli forces withdraw from all the populated areas during the elections period," according to the sources.

According to the American letter of assurances, the Palestinians would hold elections in the occupied territories one year after the launching of the peace conference for the interim period until the final status of the territories is reached during negotiations.

The Palestinian sources added that the memo also reiterates the Palestinian commitment to speed up the peace process, and asks Mr. Baker that his country fulfil its commitment to the time-frame of the negotiations, as stated in the American letter of assurances.

Havel quits

PRAGUE (AP) — Vaclav Havel used his 99th and last weekly radio address as president Sunday to reaffirm his belief in a single Czechoslovakia, but said he could not be disappointed by its impending breakup.

The playwright-turned-president announced his resignation Friday — the day the Slovak republic declared its intention to become independent. Mr. Havel said he would step down Monday.

Mr. Slovaks, who inhabit the smaller eastern republic in the Czechoslovak federation, and the more numerous and prosperous Czechs appear intent on dividing the 74-year-old common state in the next several months.

"A common state would be better. I do think that even today, but I am a realist," Mr. Havel told his nationwide radio audience.

Czechoslovakia foundered on the differing aspirations of its two main ethnic groups. Westward-looking Czechs, about two-thirds of the population of 15 million, want to press ahead with economic reforms to put the legacy of communist rule behind them.

Slovaks suffer from much higher unemployment, and are saddled with inefficient communist-era heavy industry. They have argued that economic reform must be tailored to their needs.

Hamas accuses Fateh of intimidation at Al Najah

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) Sunday appeared to renew its conflict with Fateh, accusing it of penetrating the campus of Al Najah University in Nabulus and intimidating students to vote for its supporters in the student council elections.

In a fiery statement on Sunday, Hamas said that "armed members of Fateh movement entered the university once students started preparing for their election campaigns, and brandished their weapons to threaten the students and force them to vote for Al Shabibeh Bloc, which is affiliated with Fateh."

It said that the armed members of Fateh threatened to "turn the university up-side-down if their bloc did not win the elections."

"These accusations are completely untrue, complete lies," Palestinian Ambassador to Jordan Al Tayeb Abdul Rahim told the Jordan Times when he was informed of the contents of the statement.

He said that Hamas was trying to renew its conflict with Fateh despite a peace agreement reached last week. He said that such accusations damage Palestinian national unity and hurt the

image of all the Palestinian people.

Hamas condemned Fateh for agreeing to the expulsion of six Palestinian students, describing the agreement as a grave precedent and a blow to Palestinian efforts to fight the expulsion policy.

"Our people completely reject and condemn every one involved in reaching the agreement" with Israel to expel the six Palestinians, the statement said. Hamas accused Fateh of reaching the agreement alone.

Mr. Abdul Rahim said that the decision to agree to Israeli demands to expel the students was reached with the knowledge of all those besieged at Al Najah, including members of Hamas.

"Why did members of Hamas remain in the university and support the students when they were besieged by Israeli forces," he asked.

The stand-off at Al Najah University started on July 14 when Israeli authorities besieged the campus claiming that armed Palestinians were hiding inside it.

Around 3,000 students, employees and staff members were held inside the university for four days. The conflict was defused when Palestinian leaders and

Panic offers peace talks

SARAJEVO (R) — Yugoslavia's new Prime Minister Milan Pavic offered on Sunday to start immediate peace talks with Bosnian leaders to end the four-month war in the newly-independent Balkan state of Bosnia-Herzegovina.

After almost three hours of talks with Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic, he said the Yugoslav and Serb side was ready to end "this stupid, unbelievable, unconscionable war."

He said he had given Mr. Izetbegovic "a very short time to reply" and if he did not agree the world would know which side wanted to continue the war.

Mr. Panic flew to Sarajevo on Sunday morning and met Mr. Izetbegovic at the United Nations headquarters in the Bosnian capital, where 380,000 civilians have been trapped by fighting.

The talks were going on when a new European Community-brokered ceasefire went into effect at 6 p.m. (1600 GMT) in a bid to stop killing among Serbs, Croats and Muslims in Bosnia.

Fighting broke out in April after Muslims and Croats backed independence from Yugoslavia and Serbs, 31 per cent of the 4.3 million population, rejected secession. More than 7,500 people have been killed in the fighting in Bosnia.

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Jordan defuses Iraq sanctions rift with U.S.

By Jane Arraf
Renter

AMMAN — Jordan has defused a serious rift with the United States over sanctions-busting by tightening customs checks along the Kingdom's border with Iraq, officials and diplomats said.

The clampdown, some say, may even encourage Washington to resume military aid frozen because of Jordanian sympathy for Iraq during the Gulf crisis.

"The pressure is off since they seem to be making a sincere effort to enforce sanctions," a senior Western envoy said, ahead of a visit this week by U.S. Secretary of State James Baker. "We're getting better and better at sanctions — we should be

congratulated," said one Jordanian official.

Jordan has been Baghdad's main supply line since the U.N. Security Council slapped on the trade blockade after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

U.S. irritation at what it saw as Jordan's leaky border threatened a thaw which began in the Kingdom's relations with Washington after a U.S.-led multinational coalition forced Iraqi troops out of Kuwait last year.

Washington wanted to station U.N. observers on the Iraqi border to halt what it said was smuggling that enabled Baghdad to defy the trade blockade.

But diplomats said Washington appeared to be satisfied with measures taken by Jordan after the

Kingdom last month rejected the observer plan as an infringement of sovereignty.

The Security Council has kept in place the blockade to force Iraqi compliance with the terms of the Gulf war ceasefire.

Government officials say Jordan has always strictly enforced the sanctions, controversial in a largely pro-Iraqi country. They maintain a public silence over the increased checks.

But officials, diplomats and traders say privately that inspections and supervision have been stepped up to the point that food shipments allowed by U.N. sanctions are being delayed.

Others said the cabinet had unanimously supported the mea-

sures.

Mr. Baker is expected to raise the subject when he meets King Hussein in Amman on Tuesday during a regional tour to try to inject new life into Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Despite European and Japanese help, Jordan has still not recovered from the loss of aid and foreign exchange from Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states which went to war against Iraq.

Although many Jordanian officials believe that getting rid of the Iraqi regime and sanctions would be in Jordan's best interests. Diplomats widely discount reports that the King has pledged help for covert operations to topple the Iraqi government.

Khartoum committed to negotiated end to civil war despite gains — officials

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Sudanese officials said Sunday that the recent military victories against the rebels in southern Sudan do not preclude a negotiated settlement to the prolonged conflict that has ravaged the country and caused thousands of deaths.

"The government and the people of Sudan are fully convinced that the country cannot achieve stability unless a negotiated settlement to the conflict is reached," said Sudanese Ambassador to Jordan Abdullah Jubarah.

The rebellion in southern Sudan first erupted in the mid-fifties and continued to simmer until 1983 despite a peace agreement in 1972. Massive civil war started in 1984 when renegade army Colonel John Garang led the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA) to a major war against the central government in Khartoum.

The National Salvation Front (NSF), which has been reorganising and strengthening the army since it rose to power in a military coup three years ago, last March launched a decisive military campaign against the rebels, driving them out of their major strongholds.

Accusing the rebels of having no political vision, a member of the Sudanese Transitional National Council (STNC) said Sunday that his government will exercise its right to ensure stability in all of Sudan, which occupies 8.3 of the total area of Africa. However, he said, the Sudanese government will pursue peace negotiations with the rebels with-

out compromising the country's integrity.

Speaking at a press conference to mark three years of NSF rule in Sudan, four Sudanese officials painted a rosy picture of the economic, political and social situation in the 27 million people country.

Hassan Hamdine, general secretary of the Transitional National Council, said the Sudanese people are rallying behind their government to bring about stability and social justice. He said that Sudan was being targeted by Western governments and media because it has refused to agree to jump into their bandwagon.

Mr. Hamdine lashed at Egypt for what he described as its condescending view of the Sudanese people and its insistence on approaching Sudan with a "parental" mentality.

The minister of state at the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, Abdul Wahab Hamzah, said the NSF had made tremendous gains on the economic front, bringing the economic annual growth from a decline of 1.5 per cent before it came to power to 11.3 last year. He said that Sudan was approaching self-sufficiency and is exporting agricultural products.

"Sudan has been transformed from a beggar country to a state with self-sufficiency," he said.

Sudan has been involved with tough negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) because it has defaulted on its debt payment. The fund had stopped all loans to the country and negotiations are continuing between the two sides.

Mr. Hamzah said that Sudan

would resume payments on its \$10 billion debt once it generates enough revenue from its exports.

The Sudanese official said the IMF was a tool of Western countries hostile to Sudan and is trying to impose its will on the country. Mr. Hamzah said that Sudan will present the IMF with its home-grown solutions to the economic woes and will not accept formulas tailored by outsiders.

The minister acknowledged that the economic adjustment process of liberalising prices and freeing the market was causing some hardships but said that a comprehensive social policy that subsidises the poor and people with limited income is easing these problems. He said that only 20 per cent of the Sudanese people have limited incomes and the rest are self-employed people and farmers who raised the prices of their products to the market level.

The minister said that the economic measures led to a limited inflation of 13 per cent because of the growth of exports and the gross national product (GNP), estimated at \$6 billion.

The Sudanese officials categorically denied the presence of mass starvation in Sudan. They said that news of widespread hunger in the country is promoted by Western propaganda.

The officials also denied the presence of training bases for terrorists in their country.

There is jihad in Sudan, said Abdul Al-Jalil al-Karori, member of the Transitional National Council, but it is being launched by the Sudanese people. No foreigners are trained in Sudan, he said.

Way cleared for more observers in Mogadishu

NAIROBI (AP) — Deployment of ceasefire monitors in Somalia's capital will resume now that one of the city's two warring factions has lifted its objection, according to a U.N. official.

Mohammad Sahnoun, U.N. special envoy to Somalia, said General Mohamed Farrah Aideded gave the green light Friday after interim President Ali Mahdi Mohammad agreed to halt the release of a currency.

"Aideded has agreed the remaining observers can come," Mr. Sahnoun said in a satellite telephone interview. "We are just figuring out when."

The stand-off ended after three days of separate talks between Mr. Sahnoun, Mr. Ali Mahdi and Gen. Aideded.

Four of the 50 unarmed monitors arrived July 6, Gen. Aideded later objected to the arrival of the rest until Mr. Ali Mahdi stopped releasing the money.

Gen. Aideded, who is chairman of the United Somali Congress (USC), argued the currency would increase tension in Mogadishu. He declared the money illegal and threatened severe punishment to anyone caught dealing in it.

The value of 1,000 new Somali shillings is equivalent to 100,000 of the old currency, according to Mr. Ali Mahdi's faction.

The row threatened to scuttle U.N. efforts to improve security so that food and medical supplies can reach hundreds of thousands of the hungry and the sick in the split city.

Gen. Aideded controls the northern and southern sections of Mogadishu.

The Red Cross believes more than 100 children are dying daily in the devastated city. Andrew Natsios of the U.S. Agency for International Development estimates 2,000 people are dying daily in and around Mogadishu.

Both warring factions represent rival factions of the congress, which chased Mohammad Siad Barre from Mogadishu in January 1991.

Mr. Ali Mahdi and Gen. Aideded agreed to the monitors as part of a United Nations-brokered ceasefire in March after five months of savage fighting.

More than 30,000 people, mostly women and children, were killed in the battle for the control of the city.

The Security Council has approved eventual deployment of a 500-person security force to guard convoys of humanitarian aid in Mogadishu, but the date of their arrival has not been agreed upon.

Armed bandits have looted warehouses and convoys, making relief work almost impossible in Mogadishu and the rest of the Horn of Africa nation.

Syria calls for U.N. and European role in quest for peace

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria said on Sunday the United States had a real chance to advance the Middle East peace process but urged a role for the United Nations and Europe.

"We should consider the necessity of giving a role to the United Nations and European countries in the peace march," said the ruling party's Al-Baath daily newspaper.

The United Nations and the European Community (EC) have observer status in U.S.-sponsored Arab-Israeli peace negotiations launched in Madrid last October.

U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, eager to revive Middle East talks after a Labour Party victory in Israeli elections, was in the Jewish state on Sunday. He is also scheduled to visit Syria, Jordan, Egypt and Saudi Arabia during the regional tour.

Earlier, in commentary attacking Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Syria said U.S. loan guarantees to Israel would harm the Middle East peace process.

"The United States has a real opportunity to give momentum to the peace process and rid the Middle East of the whirlpool of war and turmoil, if it shows the necessary decisiveness towards Israel's schemes," Syrian radio said late on Saturday.

"Granting Rabin the huge loans he is requesting will reflect adversely on the peace issue," it added.

Mr. Baker and Mr. Rabin are expected to discuss the \$10 billion loan guarantees, frozen because of defeated Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's settlement drive.

Mr. Rabin has vowed to accelerate the peace process, stalled by Mr. Shamir. His government has frozen all contracts for building houses for Jews in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

But the radio, monitored by the British Broadcasting Corporation, dismissed his peace proposals.

"Rabin demonstrated the truth behind his expansionist schemes when he announced the permanent annexation of Jerusalem (the Syrian) Golan (Heights), and continued settlement building in the frontline positions."

The United States, it said, should refuse to aid Israel "unless its rulers pledge fully and comprehensively to stop settlement building and adhere to U.N. Security Council resolutions and the land for peace principle."

Mr. Rabin's slowdown on settlements prompted Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak to arrange a summit with Mr. Rabin and could improve Israel's chances of getting U.S. loan guarantees.

Mr. Baker is likely to take up the Israeli request for U.S. aid with Mr. Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres in light of the suspension of new contracts.

The loans would be used to help absorb tens of thousands of new immigrants, Mr. Bush, seeking reelection, could improve his standing with supporters of Israel by providing the guarantees, and Mr. Rabin's slowdown of the settlement might give him an opening.

Iran wants Germany to complete Bushehr plant

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati has urged Germany to complete unfinished projects in the Islamic republic, including a nuclear power plant, Tehran Radio reported.

The state-run radio said the German government's response would help remove obstacles to expanding ties between Tehran and Bonn.

The Iranians had been expected to intensify their demands for Germany to complete the nuclear plant at Bushehr, in southern Iran, and other projects following the June 17 release of two German hostages held by pro-Iranian extremists in Lebanon.

The details of the agreement under which the German captives were freed has not been disclosed.

But there was speculation before the captives were freed that part of the deal would be German agreement to complete the Bushehr plant.

Bonn has in the past refused Iranian demands it complete the Bushehr plant. But the radio indicated that Tehran still seeks a more positive response from the Germans.

"In consideration of the fact that Iran has constantly shown goodwill towards the promotion of Tehran-Bonn relations, and has devoted considerable efforts towards the release of the German hostages in Lebanon, expectations of a response from the German government appears to be something natural and logical," the radio noted.

Germany's Kraftwerke Union, a subsidiary of the giant Siemens corporation, began building the facility in 1975 as part of the late Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's ambitious nuclear energy programme.

But the project, which was planned to have two 13,000-

megawatt reactors, was abandoned after the 1979 Islamic revolution when the plant was about 30 per cent completed.

The Iraqis bombed the plant several times during the 1980-88 war with Iran.

Tehran, which has reactivated its nuclear programme, has in the past threatened to withhold contracts worth billions of dollars unless the Germans complete the plant.

The radio said the unfinished projects issue was one of the main topics Mr. Velayati discussed with German leaders during a two-day visit to Bonn and Berlin earlier this week.

He also sought to "end the trade imbalance between Tehran and Bonn," the radio noted.

Germany is Iran's main trading partner. But the Iranians have long felt they were getting the short end of the stick.

German exports to Iran last year were estimated at 6.7 billion marks (\$4.53 billion), while it only imported Iranian goods worth 1.5 billion marks (\$1.01 billion).

The radio recalled that in July last year German Economy Minister Jürgen Möllemann announced that Bonn would not cooperate in completing the Bushehr plant.

Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani was highly critical of the German position at that time.

"While expressing his dissatisfaction over such a posture of the German official, Rafsanjani called for further efforts by officials of the two countries to resolve this problem," the radio said.

Apart from Bushehr, other German projects in Iran include a blast plant in the southern port of Imran Khomenei, a Mercedes Benz plant in East Azerbaijan province and an agricultural machinery factory in the north-western city of Qazvin.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Qadhafi sends best wishes to recovering Pope

NICOSIA (R) — Libya's leader Muammar Qadhafi sent a message to Pope John Paul on Saturday, wishing him a speedy recovery from recent surgery to remove a tumour, the Libyan news agency JANA reported. The agency said Colonel Qadhafi congratulated the Pope on the successful operation and "expressed his wishes... for (the Pope's) quick return to carry on with his humanitarian duties."

Austrian foreign minister visits Iran

NICOSIA (R) — Austrian Foreign Minister Alois Mock met Iranian officials on Sunday to discuss ways of expanding bilateral cooperation, the Iranian news agency IRNA said. Mr. Mock, heading an economic delegation, arrived in Tehran late on Saturday for a two-day visit. During a meeting with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati the two leaders agreed to explore fresh avenues for trade and economic cooperation. IRNA quoted Mock as saying Austria was keen to help Iran implement a five-year development plan launched in 1990.

Saudis send relief to war-torn Bosnia

NICOSIA (R) — Saudi Arabia on Sunday opened an air bridge between Riyadh and Sarajevo to fly tonnes of food and medical supplies to war-battered Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Saudi Press Agency said aircraft planes were flying relief and donations worth 102 million riyals (\$27 million) to Muslims in the former Yugoslav republic. The agency, monitored by Iranian news agency IRNA, said a contribution from Saudi Arabia to help ease the suffering of our Muslim brothers in Bosnia. The prince heads a committee collecting donations for Yugoslavia's Muslims.

Mrs. Mitterrand appeals to U.N. over Kurds

PARIS (R) — The outspoken wife of French President Francois Mitterrand has appealed to the United Nations to help the people of Iraqi Kurdistan, where she escaped death in a car bomb attack this month. Danielle Mitterrand made the appeal in a joint letter with Health and Humanitarian Affairs Minister Bernard Kouchner addressed to U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali and published by the newspaper Le Monde on its front page. Mrs. Mitterrand, who heads a French human rights group, was touring Kurdistan with Mr. Kouchner when a car bomb exploded as their convoy drove by on July 6, killing four people and wounding 19. The letter said the United Nations should ignore Iraq's sovereignty when aid to help Iraqi Kurds survive was at stake. "Humanitarian action is needed. But soon, we will not be able to do anything if we must appeal to the executioner to come to the aid of his victims," the letter said.

Gulf soldiers' ailments have no single cause

INDIANAPOLIS (AP) — U.S. army physicians have been unable to find a common cause for ailments that have plagued some reservists from the state of Indiana since returning from the Gulf war, a newspaper said. The Indianapolis Star on Saturday reported partial results of an army medical study of 144 Indiana reservists. The reservists had one or more of such symptoms as aching teeth, thick saliva, chronic fatigue and aching joints and muscles. Personnel across the country have reported similar ailments. Lee Harris, a spokesman for the American Legion's national headquarters in Indianapolis, said it may be premature to conclude the symptoms are not related. The study was conducted by Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington and Norman H. Teer, command surgeon for the 123rd army reserve command, based at Fort Benjamin Harrison in Indianapolis.

Crew of UAE ship saved after it sinks

SUEZ (AP) — A United Arab Emirates (UAE) cargo ship sank off the Somali coast in bad weather last Tuesday and its crew of 15 spent several hours in life boats until a German vessel saved them, navigation authorities said Sunday. The UAE ship, Al Salama, was carrying 200 tonnes of sugar and other food items from Dubai to Somalia when high waves and strong winds overcame its aged hull and flooded its engine room, causing the vessel to sink. It sank around 40 miles north of the Somali coast.

Egypt's ambassador to Rome dies

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's ambassador to Rome, Hoda Al Marasy, died Saturday in Paris during an operation to remove a tumor from her spinal cord, the Foreign Ministry said Sunday. She was 53. Mrs. Marasy had been ambassador to Rome for the past four years and was due back in Cairo next month. Ahmad Abul Gheit, director of Foreign Minister Amr Musa's office, had already been named as her replacement. Mrs. Marasy was born in June 1939. She joined the diplomatic corps in 1961, one year after she graduated from university with an art degree. She had worked in Egyptian embassies in Paris and Dakar. She is survived by her husband, Fayez Biktash, Egypt's ambassador to Benin, and two daughters.

UAE desert rapists sentenced to death

ABU DHABI (R) — Two Arabs have been sentenced to death for raping an Indian mother and her two teenage daughters in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) desert in May, a court source said on Sunday. The grandmother, 75, died of a heart attack after witnessing the five-hour ordeal at knife-point. The Abu Dhabi Sharia Court convicted the two men, identified only by their first names, of kidnapping and rape and other minor offences for the crime committed in the UAE northern desert. The legal source at the court said Saturday's death sentence was subject to confirmation by the federal high court within one month. If confirmed, the men are likely to be shot. Newspapers reporting the rape said the two men had stopped to offer help to an Indian family whose car broke down near Umm Al Qaiwain, about 200 kilometres north of Abu Dhabi. The father stayed behind to repair the car after the men offered to drive the mother, grandmother and two girls aged 13 and 16 to their home. Instead they took them 20 kilometres into the desert where they were raped at knife-point. The newspapers said the victims were found near death from dehydration after being abandoned in the desert with the dead grandmother.

Nahda leader denies Ben Ali death plot

TUNIS (AP) — The acting leader of a fundamentalist group accused of plotting to assassinate President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali told a court that his group sought only to open up the political process and participate as a legal party.

Sadek Chourou, acting president of the illegal fundamentalist group Al Nahda (Renaissance), is among 279 Muslims being tried on charges ranging from plotting to overthrow the government to attempted assassination.

Of the 279 on trial, 55 are being tried in absentia. The group includes police, soldiers and customs officials.

Mr. Chourou, under questioning by Judge Bechir Gueddos, denied allegations that Al Nahda had formed a military wing to kill Mr. Ben Ali and set up a theocratic state.

"This is pure imagination," he said in testimony late Saturday. "Our movement is political... and its goal is not to stage a military coup d'etat but the legal participation in the political life of our country as a movement of the opposition."

Other defendants testifying Saturday repeated earlier claims that, confessions were extracted under torture.

Mohammad Salah Gassouma, who admitted being a member of Al Nahda, said he was taken to the Interior Ministry where he was being held by various parts of his body for more than 80 hours and not allowed to sit down for nearly five days.

Mr. Gassouma, 35, who said he collected funds for Al Nahda to assist poor Muslim families, said he also was forced to witness "nude women (prisoners) being

penetrated in their genitals by pieces of wood and iron."

"How can we speak of human rights and dignity when such atrocities are committed by a minister in power," he said.

The government denies the charges of torture which it says are "without foundation."

Authorities claim the defendants, who are being tried in two groups, planned to acquire a Stringer missile to shoot down the presidential plane. The prosecution says the defendants finally planned to kill Mr. Ben Ali with a car bomb or by infiltrating the presidential plane.

Rachid Ghamouchi, the president of Al Nahda living in secret exile, has denounced the trial as a "settling of political scores."

"Every time there is an opposition it is liquidated," he said in a radio interview.

31 sex crimes reported among U.S. troops in Gulf

WASHINGTON (AP) — Army soldiers allegedly committed at least 31 sex crimes against fellow U.S. troops in the Gulf during Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield, including several rapes, a published report says.

"An article to be published in Monday's Army Times says one incident involved a married sergeant who was charged with rape, indecent assault and adultery after he allegedly raped several female soldiers at the Saudi port of Al Jubayl in February 1991.

Some of the victimised women did not report the incidents for weeks or months, the report said.

"A lot of women don't report it," the paper quoted one unidentified sergeant as saying.

The report comes at a time that sexual assaults in the military have been under close examination. In the most publicised, the Tailhook scandal, navy officers allegedly fondled and disrobed 26

women — half of them officers — in the hallway of a Las Vegas hotel last September.

An army spokesman, Major Rick Thomas, said he has no reason to challenge the accuracy of the report by the independent weekly newspaper.

"In the army, not only do we not condone sex crimes, but we condemn them," Maj. Thomas said.

Army Times wrote its article after using the Freedom of Information Act to acquire records of investigations by the army's criminal investigation command.

Few of the documents noted what, if any, steps were taken to prosecute or punish the people allegedly involved. The army deleted the names of the soldiers involved.

The alleged incidents occurred from August 1990, when U.S. troops were first sent to the Gulf, through July 1991, five months after full-scale fighting ended.

Most of the alleged episodes occurred in Saudi Arabia before the ground war began in late February.

Army Times editor Tom Donnelly said that in addition to the 31 reported sex crimes, there were reports of two other crimes against army troops in which the alleged assailants were Saudis: One a civilian and one a soldier.

About eight of the crimes involved consensual acts that are prosecuted in the military, such as adultery or homosexual sex, said Greg Seigle, the reporter who wrote the story.

Incidents included: — A private who in December 1990 allegedly raped a female soldier after pinning her to her bed in her room at Al Jubayl. The man later admitted to investigators that he had had sex with the woman, but he denied using force. Documents say the woman reported the incident in January,

saying she "was afraid to report the incident immediately because she was afraid what other personnel would say."

— In March 1991, a man raped a specialist after entering her cabin aboard a cruise ship the military had rented to let its troops rest. The woman, who had been asleep, cried out and the man ran away. She later could not identify the assailant, even though everyone who left the ship filed past her.

— A sergeant was charged with rape in June 1991, six months after allegedly raping a female private at knife-point.

— In January 1991, a male specialist sharing a blanket with a female specialist while both were standing guard allegedly grabbed her breast. The man was charged with indecent assault.

At the height of the buildup, the army has 305,000 troops in the Gulf, 26,000 of them women.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 773111-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	... An Clair de Lune
18:10	... Le Monde Sans Maria
18:30	... News in French
19:15	... Weekly Sports Magazine
19:30	... News in Hebrew
20:00	... News in Arabic
20:30	... Close to Home
21:10	... A Pictorial Hero
22:00	... News in English
22:20	... Strauss Family
PRAYER TIMES	
04:04	... Fajr
05:36	... (Sunrise) Dhuhr
12:42	... Dhuhr
16:22	... 'Asr
19:47	... Maghrib
21:19	... Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetish, Tel. 810740	
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 633785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terrace Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Assumption Church Tel. 630851, Tel. 628543	
Assumption Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Assumption Orthodox Church Tel. 772521	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Assumption International Church Tel. 685326	
Evangelical Lutheran Church - Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 623824, 654922	
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.	
It will be fair and winds will be northwesterly moderate to fresh. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	18 / 26
Aqaba	24 / 35
Djorah	16 / 30
Jordan Valley	22 / 35
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 28, Aqaba 35. Humidity readings:	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY C

Amman 50 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMBULANCE:
Dr. Wael Kharabli 665917
Dr. Abdel Aziz Taboun 783708
Dr. Adel Dabbous 612177
Dr. Bejjat Bader 349362
Fires pharmacy 661912
Perfumes pharmacy 778336
Al Azma pharmacy 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy 636772
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 640445
Shamsi pharmacy 637660

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 893228
Blood Bank 773121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605900
Price Complaints 661776
Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Jordan Telephone Repairs 661309
Arabic Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 681000
Electricity Authority 815615

Abul Ragheb: Resource investment, solar, wind power development needed

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources, Ali Abul Ragheb Sunday reviewed Jordan's efforts to explore and develop local energy resources and to solve energy problems caused by the Gulf crisis.

Speaking at a meeting with visiting university students from Belgium, Abul Ragheb also touched on Jordanian-Belgium relations and cooperation in energy and mineral resources.

The group, representing the Olivaint Conference of Belgium (OCB), met earlier with the director general of the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA), Mohammad Saeed Arafah, who gave a briefing on energy and electricity in Jordan. He also discussed JEA plans and achievements.

Mr. Arafah spoke in detail about JEA plans to electrify rural regions and to link national grids with other Arab states and Europe.

The 25-member group, now on a visit to Jordan as guests of the

Arab Youth Forum (AYF) of Jordan, met with Mr. Kamal Freisat, director general of the Natural Resources Authority (NRA), who spoke in length about Jordanian exploration of new oil fields with foreign firms. He also touched upon the use of natural gas to generate electric power.

Petrofina, a Belgian oil firm, is one of a number of foreign companies that has been helping Jordan prospect for oil.

Mr. Abul Ragheb presented a report Saturday evening to the cabinet on energy and oil situation in the Kingdom. The report detailed general oil production and consumption, plans and prospects.

The report recommended that the government set up a national oil company, headquartered at NRA's oil department. The report also suggested the creation of a Jordanian mineral investment company, to develop natural resources and market miner-

als. Such a company, the report noted, would find alternative means of power and develop solar and wind power.

The report gave a full picture of the oil and energy situation in the Kingdom and outlined the various energy problems facing the private and public sectors. The report referred in particular to the financial difficulties and the lack of sufficient funds for investments and for the cost of electric power generation.

According to the report, Jordan consumes 3.3 million tonnes of crude oil annually, accounting for 11 per cent of the overall gross national product, or 45 per cent of Jordan's total value of exports.

The report said that the oil import bill accounts for 19 per cent of the total amount of imports. In view of these figures, the report recommended that the government and concerned parties pay attention to the energy sector in the future and try to meet the requirements of all economic sectors more cheaply.

Sharif Zeid to chair national task force on cancer centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Sunday announced his consent to chair a national task force to set up Al Amal Cancer Centre, which is being built near Jordan University Hospital.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, the prime minister's chairmanship is designed to speed up work on the vital project, started in 1989.

Earlier this month, Her Majesty Queen Noor visited the site and it was later announced that she would seek the help of international organisations to equip the centre and train personnel.

Petra said that work on the first stage of the centre has been completed and work is underway on the second stage.

The first stage entailed 8,000 square metres of building while the second was planned to entail 4,000 square metres to house dormitories and treatment sections.

The agency said that the project is being implemented by the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), which is cooperating with the Ministry of Health, the Royal Medical Services, Jordan University Hospital and the Ministry of Energy. Tenders for the equipment and

apparata needed for the centre's operations are to be announced.

GUVS and the ministries are also cooperating to recruit and train people to handle the required duties, said Petra. Petra quoted officials as saying that the Amal Cancer Centre is designed to operate independently, serving all medical sectors and charitable organisations.

It said the private and public sectors would be contributing towards this centre, which will operate on a non-profit basis.

According to Petra, JD3 million has already been invested in the civil works and additional sums are available to finalise the project and the purchase of most of the equipment.

Petra noted that the prime minister will be joined in the task force by the health minister and heads of universities, in addition to the former members of the task force, including GUVS executive President Abdullah Al Khatib.

The prime minister met at his office Sunday with Dr. Khatib who briefed him on the progress of work and the problems that impede its completion.

The Health Ministry and GUVS hope that the project will be finished in two years.

NEF, HUDC to finance loans for unemployed entrepreneurs

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Near East Foundation (NEF) is joining hands with the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDC) to finance income-generating projects by low-income groups.

The foundation has initially pledged to provide \$13,000 for a trial first-step plan to grant loans to small independent businesses by beneficiaries of homes set up by HUDC in housing estates in Jordan, according to HUDC Director General Yousef Hiyasat.

Mr. Hiyasat told the Jordan Times that the beneficiaries would receive loans that can reach up to \$1000 at six per cent interest rate. The loans will be repayable over one year, and the initial loans will go to the unemployed who are trying to start a small independent business.

It is hoped that the interest paid by the beneficiaries,

together with the capital loan, would form a nucleus for a special fund to be run later by the HUDC for more income-generating projects for the low-income groups, said Mr. Hiyasat.

The beneficiaries of these loans, he noted, will be among the residents of the 14 housing estates built by HUDC.

The loans are bound to help low-income groups increase their income, including those of housewives who want to embark on training courses before applying for loans that would finance their family projects.

Indeed, Mr. Hiyasat said, the targeted groups include mainly those unemployed who have the ability and the skill to carry out small businesses that will produce commodities on a permanent basis.

To pave the ground for the scheme, the HUDC will be sending out teams of social workers.

Preaching and religious guidance camps to resume

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs plans to resume preaching and religious guidance camps in order to activate the role of preachers, according to Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Minister Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tamimi.

Mr. Tamimi said the camps aim to provide mosque preachers and imams with training and practical experience in preaching, religious guidance, teaching, leading prayers and reciting verses of the Holy Koran.

In an interview with the Jordan

News Agency, Petra, the minister said the ministry will issue a guide on mosques in Jordan. The guide, he said, will include information on every mosque in terms of the date of its construction, capacity and area, and the names of donors who contributed to its construction.

Mr. Khatib said the ministry intends to launch annual cultural seasons that will include lectures and seminars. Several scholars from Jordan and abroad will be invited to take part in these cultural seasons, he added.

CORRECTIONS

Due to an editing error, the Jordan Times yesterday wrongly identified the photograph of Mohammad Shaker. Oudeh as that of the late Sharif Rakan Ghazi. Both were Royal Falcons pilots who died in a tragic plane crash Thursday. The Jordan Times apologises for the error.

Due to a typographical error, a story headlined "Minister: No grounds to take legal action against company that sold AIDS-infected plasma in 1986" (July 15) said that the Minister of Health has not launched any public awareness campaigns against AIDS. It should have read the "ministry," not "minister." The Jordan Times regrets the error.



Mohammad Shaker Oudeh



41st anniversary of King Abdullah's death marked

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordanians on Monday remembered His Majesty the late King Abdullah, founder of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and grandfather of His Majesty King Hussein, on the 41st anniversary of his death.

The King was assassinated while performing prayers at Al Aqsa Mosque in Arab Jerusalem in 1951.

King Abdullah is remembered for his national stands, particularly on the Palestine question and on his commitment to defend the holy shrines against Zionist aggression.

The late king played a key role in the liberation movements that began in the early 20th century. He also played a major role in the political arena, taking part in talks between his father and the allied armies after the first World War. He sought to rally Arab ranks to preserve unity of Arab

He led the Arab armies in the struggle to save Palestine from Zionist occupation in 1948 and unified the West and East banks of Jordan to set up the united Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 1950.

The Jordan News Agency, Petra said on the eve of the anniversary that the late king's endeavours were in line with the principles of the Great Arab Revolt, led by Sharif Hussein Ben Ali who waged a war of liberation against Ottoman rule in 1916 and led the Arabs towards unification and independence.

Under King Abdullah, Jordan witnessed an era of stability, security and development in trade, constitution and industry. The King succeeded in bolstering Jordan's relations with other Arab states and in Jordan he was instrumental in enhancing constitutional rule in the country.

Arabiyat stresses importance of Islamic economic system

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat Sunday received a visiting Sudanese delegation, headed by Abdul Wahhab Mahammad, Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Economic Affairs.

Dr. Arabiyat stressed the importance of building a dependant Islamic economic system to find solutions to the country's economic ills.

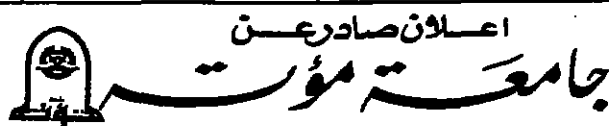
Dr. Arabiyat also called for directing special attention to the cause of Jerusalem and the Islamic shrine, and for fighting any attempts to Judaize it. In this regard, Dr. Arabiyat is entrusted with discussing any issues related to Jerusalem.

He stressed the importance of communication and the exchange of expertise between Jordan and Sudan in all fields.

The meeting was attended by chairman of the financial committee at the Lower House Abdullah Akaleh and the Sudanese ambassador to Jordan.

Also Sunday, Dr. Arabiyat received a visiting Iranian delegation, headed by Ayatollah Waiz. Dr. Arabiyat stressed Jordan's firm stands towards Jerusalem and the restoration of holy places in the occupied territories. He called for strengthening relations between Iran and Jordan in all fields, particularly in cultural relations.

Jordan Times
Tel: 667171



An Advertisement by

MUTA UNIVERSITY

Muta University announces that its Faculty of Arts is in need of teachers with M.A. degrees in the following specialisations with good average records:

1. Arabic language and literature
Semitic languages - candidate should have obtained a B.A. and M.A. degrees in Arabic - preference goes to those who are fluent in other languages.
2. English language and literature
- Writing
- English literature
- American literature
- Syntax
3. Sharia and Islamic studies
- Reciting and reading
- Islamic doctrine or faith
- Fiqh (jurisprudence in Islam)
4. Geography

Candidates should be:
1. Of Jordanian nationality
2. Medically fit
3. With the required qualifications
4. Not committed to work for any other governmental department.
Those wishing to apply should present the following documents:
1. Photocopy of the secondary school transcript
2. Photocopy of the B.A. degree and transcript
3. Photocopy of the M.A. degree and a list of subjects
4. Three personal photographs
5. Photocopy of the family book and the passport.
All applications must be directed to the personnel department at Muta University within one week of this advertisement.

Economic watchdogs now aware of need to tackle poverty — ESCWA

By P.V. Vivekanand

Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Jordan, along with Third World countries with similar problems, stands to gain from an international acknowledgement that poverty is a key element to be considered in externally-imposed economic restructuring programmes, according to a senior United Nations official.

Dr. Tayseer Abdul Jaber, head of the Economic and Social Council for West Asia (ESCWA), said the acknowledgement was made "by a high level segment" of participants at a recent meeting of the Economic and Social Council (Ecosoc) of the U.N. this month.

Particularly important among those noting the need to tackle poverty on a broad level were the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, the international economic watchdogs that have a record of dictating uncompromising terms in return for help in addressing national economic problems.

In most cases, the IMF and World Bank — mostly concerned with ensuring that debtor countries can repay their debts — give little attention to national poverty levels or economic growth while "recommending" economic restructuring programmes to individual countries. These "recommendations" include abolition of subsidies and other forms of government assistance to the poor, further compounding domestic problems and creating new ones.

"It was acknowledged that addressing poverty was vital to ensuring social stability, which in turn is a key element in national stability," Dr. Abdul Jaber, who

attended the Ecosoc meeting, told the Jordan Times.

The international consensus is expected to be translated into policies by the IMF while proposing economic programmes to countries in need, following a review of the issue at this year's General Assembly session.

Jordan is implementing a national economic revival and restructuring programmes agreed on with the IMF. The programme has already led to partial elimination of subsidies and an increase in some fuel prices, in addition to a squeeze on commercial credits. However, the impact of the measures in Jordan has not been as severe as was the case with some other countries because the Kingdom's approach contains built-in buffers to protect the poor.

IMF introduction of provisions to protect the poor in its programmes may not be of much immediate help to Jordan, but a more sympathetic approach from the watchdog could help the Kingdom in the next phase of the restructuring programme.

Officials say that the poverty level in Jordan is rising, particularly in view of the drastic economic repercussions of the Gulf crisis on the Kingdom's economy and the return home of up to 300,000 expatriates from the Gulf states.

In a report submitted to the Ecosoc meeting, Dr. Abdul Jaber presented a review of efforts to address the needs of the returnees in Jordan.

While interim measures could offer stop-gap solutions to the problems faced by Jordan, there cannot be any permanent solution of the problem without returning to regional cooperation in

labour that existed prior to the Gulf crisis, Dr. Abdul Jaber noted.

The problems confronting Jordan are multi-faceted. The Kingdom has not only lost expatriate remittances, which use to account for a good part of its foreign exchange income, but is also burdened with providing infrastructure and services to the addition in its population while grappling with a mounting unemployment rate.

ESCWA, which is based in Amman, is closely familiar with the situation in Jordan since it has been conducting studies and recommending projects and programmes to alleviate the problem, Dr. Abdul Jaber noted.

"Cooperation in labour was one of the best-suited approaches for an equitable distribution of wealth in the region," he said, referring to expatriate remittances to home countries. While the ESCWA chief conceded that post-Gulf crisis politics do not seem very conducive to reachieving this end, "We cannot simply ignore this fact ... and should work towards it."

Another notable outcome of the Ecosoc meeting was a drive to make the council "a strong economic arm" of the U.N., "just as the Security Council is a strong political arm," Dr. Abdul Jaber said.

Towards this end, a series of measures is being considered, including the centralisation of U.N. agencies, elimination of overlapping work by various U.N. organisations and redundant agency coordinators on the national level and improvement in coordination among all organs of the world body, the ESCWA chief said.

UNITED NATIONS
Economic and Social Commission
for Western Asia
(ESCWA)



الأمم المتحدة
اللجنة الاقتصادية والاجتماعية
لغربي آسيا
(الإسكوا)

Vacancy Announcement

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), Amman, invites qualified candidates to apply for the following positions of a temporary nature, initially up to August 1993, in the General Services Category:

REGISTERED NURSE

Qualifications:

- 1- B.Sc. General Nursing.
- 2- Candidate must possess certificate as a Registered Nurse.
- 3- Command of the English language essential—written and spoken.
- 4- Five years of progressive and responsible experience in the field of nursing.
- 5- Knowledge in the handling of all medical apparatus is required.
- 6- Driver's licence is an asset.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- 1- To maintain up-to-date medical records on all staff members.
- 2- To carry out established United Nations procedures for medical evacuation.
- 3- To ensure that sound medical practices are adhered to.
- 4- To carry out routine first aid and other medical procedures.

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- 1- High School Certificate.
- 2- Sound knowledge of English—spoken and written.
- 3- Must be able to successfully pass the United Nations Clerical Test in Arabic and English.
- 4- Ability to type in Arabic and English. Use of Computer Desirable.
- 5- Five years' experience in the relevant field.
- 6- Driver's licence required.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- 1- Drafts routine correspondence (Arabic and English), completes visa application forms, and other related customs clearances from the issuance by Embassies.
- 2- Handles customs clearance for all official consignments, staff cars, and other related customs clearances from the Customs Department.
- 3- Handles residence permits and entry visas into Jordan, through the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Interior and the Department of Immigration, as and when necessary.

Applications should be addressed to the following—no later than 26 July 1992:

Personnel Section
Attn. Ms. Wendy Woodroffe
UNESCWA
P. O. Box 927115
Amman - Jordan

Applicants considered not suitable will not be replied to.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Citizens who attended funeral thanked

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Court issued Sunday a statement in which it thanked all citizens who took part in the funeral of Sharif Rakan Ghazi or offered condolences to members of the royal family. Sharif Rakan died in a plane crash during an air show in Amman Thursday. He was laid to rest at the Royal Cemetery in Amman.

13 people killed in car crashes

AMMAN (Petra) — Thirteen people were killed and 213 others injured in 422 car accidents in the week of July 4th, according to a statistical bulletin issued by the traffic department. Of the accidents, 371 occurred inside city borders, killing eight people and injuring 153, according to the bulletin. It added that 51 accidents took place on high roads, killing five people and injuring 60.

WHAT'S GOING ON JERASH FESTIVAL

★ Performance by Al Balder Folk Arts Troupe at the southern theatre of Jerash — 9 p.m.

★ Performance by the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC) ballet group at the centre in Amman — 8 p.m.

★ Arabic poetry recital at the Royal Cultural Centre — 5:30 p.m.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation.
Established 1975
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The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Are we being served?

JORDAN'S Consumer-Protection Society recently held a one-day seminar to explore the ethics of advertisements and their effect on society at large and consumers in particular. Since the subject is very pertinent and interesting, the society is commended for its effort. However, we feel that there are more pressing consumer issues that the society can tackle immediately and before organising academic seminars, conducting scientific research and carrying out laborious investigations. Almost everything that people deal with is in one way or the other a form of consumption. The state of the roads consumes not only cars' tyres but also costs human lives. Taxis that belong more to repair garages than to the roads wear and tear not only people's clothes but also their nerves. People pay, and sometimes dearly, for governmental services. These and many other areas of consumption certainly deserve the attention of the society. We therefore feel that it is rather an exercise in futility to discuss issues like advertising and leave, for example, the tonnes of poisonous or expired food being sold illegally all over the country. Thousands of vendors in Amman, Zarqa and all over the country exhibit their food products out in the open where dust and flies are sure to cause illnesses. Water supplied by the Water Authority should be purified before drinking, and even chlorine contained in it can be a pollutant. Public transportation buses are filthy, dangerous and irregular.

These are only a few examples of where the society can direct its efforts. For unless it does work where it should people will not have faith in it, nor will they support its activities.

What the society could do, for instance, is take one matter at a time, hammer it out, mobilise people to take action on it, and when it achieves its purpose move to another. Only by so doing could the society make its existence and potential felt.

One more thing the society can do and should and should use TV, radio and the press to propagate its cause at any and all times. Additionally, it has to learn to use posters and enlist volunteers wherever and whenever possible.

Still further, the consumer society should start by asking the consumers themselves of their concerns, and their ideas for improving consumer services. Thus, the society can enlist people's help and promote their awareness. It is not enough to hold seminars or conduct research to help consumers. At the end of the day it is only consumers themselves who can serve their own cause and interests.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IT SEEMS there is no sufficient coordination among the Arab parties involved in the peace process with regard to Security of State James Baker's visit this week, said Al Ra'i daily. This is made clear by the fact that Mr. Baker is meeting with Yitzhak Rabin and Hosni Mubarak without any prior planning or coordination with the other Arab parties because Cairo chose not to consult with these parties, said the daily. It said that lack of coordination can by no means be satisfactory to anyone and does not serve the Arab causes, particularly vis-a-vis the Palestine question and Mr. Baker's fresh tour in the region. Jordan has reached out to Syria to discuss all aspects related to the developments in the region and King Hussein was keen on discussing the peace process and the need for coordination with the Syrian president during his last visit to Damascus, the paper pointed out. It is true that the Arabs are now in disarray, but one cannot accept the status quo and should try hard to bring about concerted stands and unite the Arab position in the coming talks with the U.S. secretary of State, said the paper. Close coordination among the Arab parties, said the daily, is of utmost importance at this juncture regarding the peace process because it is a national responsibility at a time when the Arabs are struggling to establish justice and safeguard national interests.

JAMES BAKER should understand that he cannot come to Amman and discuss peace in the region the U.S. administration maintains economic and psychological war on Jordan, said Tareq Masarweh in Al Ra'i Sunday. The writer said that Washington has been able to bribe and intimidate to abort any pan-Arab action aimed at defusing the Iraqi-Kuwait problem, and was able later to maintain divisions among the Arab states, dealing with each one separately. But one can by no means accept to be coerced and pressured and the siege on Aqaba should stop, and the war on Jordan must end, said the writer. He said Mr. Baker should hear clear and resounding words from Jordan that his trip to Jordan is not part of the Bush presidential campaign, aimed primarily to win the votes of the American Jews, that Jordan cannot accept peace that is only beneficial to Israel, and that Jordan should not be taken for granted, accepting anything that is being dictated to it. He said that although Mr. Baker is now trying to serve the Bush administration by rewarding the Israelis and Mr. Rabin, Jordan's own views and interests should be respected.

Weekly Political Pulse

Arabs should drop some old habits, adapt to changes

IT has become customary for the Arab side to pour cold water on any overtures for peace coming its way from Israel. The new peace overtures made by the recently elected Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin have thus met the same old, traditional fate. In retrospect, this is not surprising in view of the long record of Israeli relations with its Arab neighbours that was marked on the one hand, by pious talks on peace and on the other, by a permanent strategy that aimed and achieved expansion. No wonder the Arabs have grown sceptical of any Israeli offer to make peace in the Middle East, even when it could be real. The record of the Labour Party and its leadership, throughout the history of Israel, on issues of war and peace in the Middle East did not help either in view of the fact that most of the wars waged by Israel against its neighbours were in fact orchestrated and conducted by Labour Party leaders. Against this background, the Arab parties to the ongoing but anemic peace process reacted normally when they rejected out of hand Mr. Rabin's recent offers to engage them in serious peace talks to resolve once and for all the Arab-Israeli conflict, including of course its Palestinian dimension.

The Arab reaction was therefore almost reflex, without much forethought or serious consideration, of whether this time around the rise to power by Mr. Rabin accords the Arab World new windows of opportunities to wage peace. Still, it is high time now to break away from this syndrome of automatic rejection of anything that emanates from Israel, even though the kind of peace language Mr. Rabin spoke when he took power last week admittedly does not much correspond with the well-recognised international norms as exemplified by U.N. Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

The case against rejecting outright the new Israeli perspective on peace is understandable not only because the peace process is the only political game being made available to the Arab parties

but also because Rabin's initiative marks a dramatic improvement on anything else heard from the Israeli side for the past few years if not decades.

So in relative terms, the new peace spirit being now expounded by Mr. Rabin and his dovish cabinet on the prospects for peace in the region deserves at least closer scrutiny lest yet another opportunity to wage peace in the area should elude both sides. The Arab World must also recognise that the peaceful intentions of Israel, if there are any at the moment, need to be cultivated and nurtured by assuming a more positive posture on some of the confidence-building measures that the Labour led government in Israel might come up with in the months ahead.

This is all the more necessary in view of the fact that in the final analysis it is the Israeli people who will accept or reject the peace terms being negotiated by Mr. Rabin. A little bit of psychology in this vein would not hurt. In fact, the more open-minded and positive in thinking the Arabs are towards not only the substance of the peace negotiations, but also their format and venue, the more possible it would become to secure from the Israelis just and comprehensive peace conditions that are closer than ever to the international norms set out by the United Nations.

To be sure, there is no guarantee whatsoever that any of these propositions will be borne out at the end of the tunnel. It would certainly be prudent to continue to be cautious or even dubious of Mr. Rabin's intentions by assuming the worst, but hoping for the best and being hopeful and optimistic on the basis that the world in which we live is quite different from the world that both sides had experienced in the past.

There are so many new elements and variables in the new international equation that came into being in the wake of the collapse of the communist order that justify a more positive reading of the Israeli pronouncements concurrently with main-

taining the Arab guard against any possible bad scenario that may ensue at the end. There can be no doubt that Israel and its body politic are also affected by the contemporary dramatic changes in the world. There are new game rules in the world, coupled with new perspectives and orientations. The fact that the Labour Party in Israel had won the race against the Likud Party is in itself an indication of how much Israel has been influenced by the emergence of new constellations of powers in the world on the ashes of the old system that governed international relations for the past decades. To continue to gauge Israeli intentions and objectives on the basis of the old stereotype guidelines would therefore be folly.

Mr. Rabin and his policies, therefore, should be taken to task and put to the test. Where they are incomplete or not in conformity with the relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions, greater positive and determined efforts should be exerted to improve them and build on them rather than reject them in toto. For example, as unsatisfactory as Mr. Rabin's offers for Palestinian self-rule may be, they present a remarkable improvement on anything that the former Israeli prime minister had offered on the same subject. There is a great deal that could be constructed on the proposed Palestinian autonomy and with prudence and wisdom, such self-government even as limited as it may be at this moment, could very well end up being the very conduit for Palestinian independence after the five years of trial that has been insisted on by Israel, especially if the Arab cards are played well.

Besides, what is the alternative course to follow if the peace initiatives of Mr. Rabin are refused outright. What is called for in this context are operational ideas and not academic or abstract proposals that would lead nowhere in actual terms. Any lingering complexes about engaging the Israelis in real peace negotiations on the basis of international legitimacy should be shed in order to give peace in the Middle East a chance to succeed.

By Walid Sadi

Change of attitude seen in Al Najah deal

By Jon Immanuel

THE WAY in which the Al Najah University crisis was settled has established a precedent for future peace talks which places political common sense above rigid principles both Israelis and Palestinians said Saturday.

Three issues on both sides, defined as basic principles, have been sacrificed. They include the Palestinian's insistence on the right not to be arrested on a university campus, and the assertion that deportation for any length of time is worse than imprisonment, because of its im-

plication that Israel has the right to separate a Palestinian from his land.

On the Israeli side, the supremacy of Israeli law was sacrificed for a negotiated, political settlement.

Both the Israeli right-wing opposition and some members of Palestinian left-wing groups, mainly from abroad, attacked the Al Najah settlement on the grounds that important principles had been breached.

Ariel Sharon called the agreement "unprecedented," but Prime Minister Rabin said on television last night that a precedent had been set before he became premier, when several

fugitives gave themselves up and were deported for up to three years. A similar offer was reportedly made to seven Gazans, scheduled for deportation since January.

However, Mordechai Gur, slated to be Mr. Rabin's deputy defence minister, made clear that the shift from rigid legal or ideological principles to political expediency was a positive one that boded well for a political settlement to the broader Israel-Palestinian problem.

"I think that this kind of solution might even symbolise the very specific and unique moment in which we live, we Israelis and

Palestinians. I believe that if we took it from a historical point of view, both sides gained a lot because it is a good sign that even a confrontation like this once, involving armed people or people believed to be armed, can be solved in a diplomatic way," Mr. Gur said on Israeli radio.

Likud MK and Ariel Mayor Ron Nachman condemned the agreement. Asked on Israeli radio what he would have done to arrest the six gunmen without bloodshed, he said, "I don't know. I am talking about principles. In principle, Israel is the sovereign country here and Israel must not negotiate with terrorists and murderers. Israel has to pun-

ish them."

However, Palestinians tended to agree with Mr. Gur's assessment. "It is a very dangerous precedent to have agreed to the principle of deportation," said Sae'd Kana'an, a well-informed political activist in Nabulus. "But Rabin was courageous to have exercised self-restraint for two days. This will give courage to peaceful negotiations and the peace process itself."

The bending of principles on both sides for the sake of peace has placed the Palestinian-Israeli problem on firmer political footing. On the Palestinian side, it means that it might be possible to

talk about subjects like settlements, refugees, statehood and elections in terms of political feasibility instead of principles.

The Al Najah settlement shows that the government and the local Palestinian leadership, faced with a problem neither of them planned, are both able to step back from the brink. In contrast, PLO leader Yasser Arafat turned up the political temperature of the crisis in a Radio Monte Carlo broadcast Wednesday when he praised "the heroic student resisters" and condemned Mr. Rabin as "showing his true face —" The Jerusalem Post.

Women in society according to Islam and Christianity

At the invitation of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Bin Talal and Cardinal Francis Arinze, president of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue of the Holy See, a Muslim-Christian Colloquium was held in Rome from 24-26 June 1992. Jointly organised by the Royal Academy for Islamic Civilisation Research (Al Albait Foundation), and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, the Vatican, the Colloquium had thirty Muslim and Christian scholars participate in its deliberations which studied the theme "Women in Society according to Islam and Christianity."

In the inaugural session, Dr. Nasir El-Din El-Assad, president of the Royal Academy, and Cardinal Francis Arinze, president of the Pontifical Council, presented opening addresses.

Participants were received by Pope John II on the morning of Friday June 26. In his brief address, the Pope commented on the role of women in society today, and stressed the importance of joint efforts by Muslims and Christians to improve women's status and participation.

Three working groups briefly discussed issues arising from the papers, and the following are some of the main points agreed upon:

1. Both our religions, Islam and Christianity, believe that God created human beings and gave them a special dignity, in which man and woman share equally. Our religions recognise the differences between men and women as God-given.

2. The participants recognise that both religions, Islam and Christianity, give the greatest importance to the status of the family as the fundamental unit of human society. Life today puts the family under stress, and its value is not everywhere fully appreciated. The responsibility of both parents remains the basis for the development and stability of a

healthy family, and enables it to play its full role in society. Both our religions appreciate the work done by parents in guiding and supporting the family, and especially the role of women in bringing up a sound and healthy new generation. This particular role of women is vital in itself, and at the same time has an influence on other activities, in the educational, social, and economic fields. This extra dimension of her role is not always sufficiently appreciated and supported.

3. While participants emphasise the essential role of women in the family and appreciate the woman's work at home, they also recognise her full right to engage in any other activities in keeping with her capabilities and circumstances, within the principles and guidelines given by each religious tradition.

4. The participants consider that misguided practices exist, which undermine the dignity of woman and limit her potential. These practices are the product of cumulative social traditions, not of conscious understanding of the true spirit of religion. Continual efforts are needed to correct these misconceptions and malpractices. We need to ensure proper interpretation of our scriptural references, and strict adherence to scriptural and reli-

gious principles; and to see that no group misuses religious teachings to oppress any other group.

5. Participants are deeply concerned about the exploitation of women, which harms their dignity, especially in entertainment and advertising. Organised efforts are needed to put an end

to this exploitation and raise awareness of the damage it does to the whole of society. On such issues, we can work together with like-minded people.

6. There are obvious shortcomings in much of current legislation concerning the treatment of women, such as terms of employment, remuneration, training,

maternity leave and privileges. It is important that this situation be corrected, and that other challenges to women be properly recognised and addressed. This is an area where Christians and Muslims should work together.

7. Religion is of the greatest importance in shaping a balanced human personality and directing

it towards the highest values of honesty, virtue and God-consciousness. Participants see the need to increase awareness of religious values among both men and women, and to strengthen their commitment to the principles of faith. This will help to guarantee and safeguard women's dignity and enable them to fulfil their role within a healthy environment of virtue and trust.

Both presidents have agreed upon a fourth colloquium, to be held in Amman in January 1994. The exact topic is yet to be determined.

The topics treated in the colloquium were:

1- Status of women:
Muslim speaker: Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Khayyat
(Vice-President, Royal Academy, Jordan)
Christian speaker: Sr. Dr. Stefania Cantore
(President, Pontifical Institute Regina Mundi, Rome).

2- Contemporary Problems and Challenges:
Christian speaker: Dr. Eleonora Masini
(Professor, Institute of Social Sciences, Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome).

Muslim speaker: Prof. Dr. Omaymah Dahhan
(University of Jordan, Amman).

3- Future Opportunities and Prospects:
Muslim speaker: Dr. Samira F. Khawaldeh
(Principal, Tibah Schools, Amman).

Christian speaker: Rev. Dr. Maurice Bornmann
(Professor, Pontificio Istituto di Studi Arabi e d'Islamistica).

Feminists rewrite gospel according to Eve

By Rebecca Fowler

IN THE beginning there was the men's version. Now comes the first complete feminist interpretation of the Bible. Eve emerges as the heroine, Adam as a wimp, Mary Magdalene as misunderstood and Jesus as something of a male chauvinist.

The Women's Bible Commentary, to be released at the end of the month by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, a 400-year-old publisher with close ties to the Church of England, is the work of a group of leading feminist theologians.

The finely detailed study — which even records that the donkey that carried Jesus into Jerusalem was female — has already angered British churchmen.

Among its claims are that Eve was no walkover for a seducing demon, but took a calculated decision to take humanity into a challenging new world beyond Eden.

Jezebel, the Old Testament queen whose name became a synonym for baroltry, in fact showed "remarkable strengths as a leader" in contrast to her feeble husband. And in the feminist New Testament, Mary Magdalene is not a prostitute, as most Christians believe.

The book also counters the widely held belief that Jesus dealt more sympathetically with women than did most men of his time. At one point it describes him as a male chauvinist who acts the part of the "dominant male" when a gentle woman asks him to heal her daughter.

Such notions outrage church traditionalists such as the Venerable George Austin, Archdeacon of York.

"This is totally wrong and a distortion of scripture. It shows there is a liberal agenda and it is creeping in on us," he said. "Exalting Eve is exalting sin."

But Dr. Judith Lieu, lecturer in the New Testament at King's

College, London, said: "Much traditional scholarship has not been objective. It has been male-dominated and that has skewed interpretation."

The publisher believes that the new approach will attract a wide range of women readers. "It is turning bible study up-side down," said Judith Longman, editorial director.

But one radical feminist was unmoved by the debate. "We should describe God in our own terms, drawn from our own day and age and not keep looking to the past," said Dr. Daphne Hampson, who is a theologian at St. Andrew's University.

"I don't think women should be looking at the Bible at all. As long as they do they are promoting patriarchal literature."

"How would it be in reverse if men were to think it necessary to engage in arguing that a woman who lived 2,000 years ago was actually awfully nice to men?" The Sunday Times.

Britain's opposition Labour Party faces uncertain future

By Peter Bale
Reuter.

LONDON — British Labour Party leader Neil Kinnock has bowed out of front-line politics. He leaves behind a confused and divided party yet to come to terms with its fourth consecutive election defeat, the failure which prompted his resignation.

On Saturday, in what is now a foregone conclusion, the party will elect an astute Scottish lawyer, 53-year-old John Smith, as the man to break its 13-year losing streak.

The fact Labour already knows who will win — regardless of an election and a leadership contest — is part of its problem.

One former party worker has accused Labour of "sleepwalking towards a leadership fix in the grubby old style."

Voting and the party are dominated by trade union barons, whose predecessors laun-

ched the party in the late 19th century in working class alliance with reformist Christians and Socialists.

Mr. Smith, who as "shadow" chancellor of the exchequer shaped what many see as the high-tax policies which cost Labour the April 9 election, has unbeatable support from powerful unions and his colleagues — themselves union-backed.

Polls give him 91 per cent support. The power of the unions, both over party elections and finance, makes it difficult for Labour to reform itself on the mould of a modern European Social Democrat Party — abandoning some of its old themes of class conflict.

Mr. Kinnock, 50, projected a fresh responsible image during the campaign but still led his party into defeat despite the longest recession since World War II, spiralling unemployment and record bankruptcies.

Labour and its critics are asking if the party cannot win under those circumstances what can it? Or should it seek a coalition with the centrist Liberal Democrats?

British voters returned the Conservative government that had ruled them since 1979, though it had changed its public face from the former prime minister Margaret Thatcher — the "iron lady" — for the friendlier image of John Major.

The election outcome, Mr. Kinnock said later, "was a choice between fear and hope, and fear won out."

Mr. Kinnock had gambled on a platform of higher taxes to provide better social services, saying he was appealing to a "bedrock of compassion" among Britons tired of Conservative selfishness.

The party he offered the electorate was unrecognisable from that of the early 1980s when Labour was enmeshed in interne-

cine strife. As leader, the Welsh coalminer's son grinded his teeth and tamed his own fiery radicalism turning it instead into powerful oratory.

But an internal party study of the 1992 election failure concluded alarmingly that Labour was not trusted.

Labour, wrote party General Secretary Larry Whitty, was seen as a "party of the past and one which holds back aspirations and tends to turn the clock back."

Conservative politician David Amess held on to the parliamentary seat for working class Basildon, east of London. It was a barometer of the election and a seat which, statistically, Labour had to win if it was going to take power nationally for the first time in 13 years.

Mr. Amess says Labour no longer understands its constituency. Conservatives have given British workers a sense of upward mobility, he says. Labour is seen

as locked into old class struggles. "I think as long as they remain a Socialist Party they don't have a chance," Mr. Amess told Reuters. "They still think the world of profit is dirty and they are obsessed with the class system."

The process of analysing what went wrong for Labour has been interrupted by a messy battle to succeed Mr. Kinnock and the party's veteran deputy leader Roy Hattersley who is also stepping down.

Mr. Smith offers little new, though his image is somewhat more sombre than that of the emotional and effusive Kinnock.

But as a consummate politician, Mr. Smith should be a powerful front man for Labour and a difficult sparring partner for Mr. Major across the debating Chamber of Parliament.

Far from a radical or a reformer his is a platform of trying to prove steadily to the British public that Labour is responsible

enough to be given the right to govern.

"The challenge for Labour in this parliament is to broaden our appeal to the whole community and to convince those who did not support us... that we have policies which will benefit them and their families," Mr. Smith has said.

His only real opponent for the leadership, Bryan Gould, also 53, offered more radical solutions including a split with union paymasters. But he has been stymied by the union vote.

"We cannot simply change the face at the top and expect to win in 1996 on the programme on which we lost in 1992," was the message Mr. Gould has struggled to deliver. Labour, he said, had to prove it still had a base of "vision and radicalism."

Mr. Kinnock, in parliament since he was 28, has neither a profession nor wealth to fall back on.

Democrats euphoric and confident, just like 1988

By Tom Ramm
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Once again, a Democratic nominee for U.S. president and his running mate field arms aloft and stood before a convention hall brimming with euphoria and confidence. It was a familiar tableau.

Four years before, Democrats linked arms with the same balloons-and-music, happy-times faith that the White House was within their grasp.

Michael Dukakis was 17 points ahead in the polls. Republican George Bush seemed to be reel-

ing on the ropes. And Mr. Dukakis' selection of Texas Sen. Lloyd Bentsen as his running mate was widely trumpeted as a masterstroke.

The rest is history.

This year, nominee Bill Clinton's surge in the polls, the rare unity of the party and the bombshell withdrawal of independent challenger Ross Perot from the race created tremendous Democratic bliss.

Delegates and party officials insist things are different this year than in 1988 — and that they've really got the best shot at the White House in years.

Maybe so. But analysts say the Democrats shouldn't put too much importance on the exhilaration that swept through the convention that ended Thursday night.

"I think it's always a false euphoria," said University of Pennsylvania Political Scientist Kathleen Jamieson. "The people with the highest stake in victory are all assembled in one place, all energized."

She said crowd enthusiasm is totally misleading at two times in a presidential campaign — at the convention and in the crowds of diehard supporters encountered

in the final days.

Although Mr. Clinton might get an initial surge from Mr. Perot's backers, the final destination of Perot supporters was much less clear.

"I think it's a lot harder for Democrats in a two-way race. But I don't think it's a cakewalk for Bush because he has alienated so many people who voted for him before," said Earl Black, a political science professor at the University of South Carolina.

Neither Democrats nor Republicans wasted any time courting the deserted Perot supporters,

though Mr. Perot did not endorse either candidate.

Addressing his remarks to Mr. Perot's "army of patriots for change," Mr. Clinton said in his convention speech: "Join us and together we will revitalize America."

Mr. Bush, from a far less lofty podium, echoed an identical appeal.

"We share the same principles with many of these people," Mr. Bush said at a hastily arranged news conference that interrupted a fishing vacation in Wyoming.

Mr. Bush campaign ads were being readied and the president was preparing to embark on a heavy schedule of pre-convention campaigning.

Over the next weeks, "we will make a concerted effort to appeal to the Perot voters," Mr. Bush campaign spokeswoman Torie Clarke said. "We'll say, 'look, we know where you're coming from.'"



Afghan refugees return home in record numbers

ISLAMABAD (R) — A record 100,000 Afghan refugees returned home from camps in Pakistan last week, increasing pressure on scarce United Nations resources.

"If the repatriation continues at this pace, more than one million people will have been repatriated by the end of August," said U.N. official Pierce Gerety in a statement.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has earmarked \$53 million to help more than five million Afghans leave camps in Pakistan and Iran and go home.

The UNHCR was spending \$2 million a week on cash and wheat grants to help the refugees start rebuilding their lives but had less than a third of the \$53 million requested, Mr. Gerety said.

The U.N. appealed last month for \$180 million to help rehabilitate Afghanistan.

But with nations switching priorities to the former Soviet bloc and other trouble spots, few appear to have money to spare for Afghanistan.

Last week Mr. Gerety warned that refugees were going back to Afghanistan so fast they could overwhelm U.N. efforts.

Baker says Rabin is serious

(Continued from page 1)

among the 1.75 million Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip as an obstacle to U.S.-backed peace talks launched nine months ago in Madrid.

It is Mr. Baker's 10th visit to Israel since the end of the Gulf war and his first since Madrid.

Mr. Rabin greeted Mr. Baker with a red-carpet welcome.

"Thank you for your readiness to take part in the continuation and acceleration in the peace process and the improvement in the relations between the two countries," the Israeli leader said.

Israeli police stepped up security surrounding Mr. Baker's visit after radio stations and newspapers reported a right wing plot to attack the American diplomat or U.S. interests. None of the reports were confirmed. One right-wing spokesman was quoted as saying the only plans were to protest Mr. Rabin's meeting with Mr. Baker.

Commenting on reported threats carried by Israeli Radio and the Maariv daily, police spokesman Shmuel Ben-Ruby said there was some "unspecific information" about possible plans to harm Mr. Baker.

"We are preparing in this regard," he added.

The reports said police and Shin Bet security agents had received anonymous information several days ago about extremists' plans to attack Mr. Baker.

Israel and army radios mentioned the Kach movement founded by the late American-born Rabbi Meir Kahane as suspected of having plans to hit American installations.

But they quoted Kach spokesman Noam Federman as denying the reports.

Right-wingers object to the peace talks.

Outside the prime minister's office, a small group of Kach activists opposed to U.S. peace efforts held up signs saying "Rabin is a traitor" and an American flag with the initials "PLO" for the Palestine Liberation Organisation, over the stars.

Mr. Rabin goes to Cairo on Tuesday for the first Israeli-

Baker could be carrying fresh ideas

(Continued from page 1)

Sharif Zeid rejected as theatrics Mr. Rabin's offer to visit Arab capitals and invitation to Arab leaders to visit occupied Jerusalem for peace talks. "We can do without such dramas and without appearing side-by-side on television screen," he said.

The positions of Jordan and other Arab countries will be determined by Israel's position and its course on the right track towards a just and durable solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, Sharif Zeid added.

The prime minister described as premature any discussion on a Jordanian-Palestinian confederation. He said this was an issue to be discussed between the two sides after Israel withdraws from the occupied territories and the Palestinians set up their own state.

Sharif Zeid expressed hope that Mr. Baker's visit would help improve relations between Amman and Washington, and to leading, if not easing, the "unjustifiable and baseless" tension in relations over the international sanctions against Iraq imposed by the U.N. Security Council.

He said Jordan was fully committed to U.N. resolutions and had implemented all Security Council resolutions and the American pressure on Jordan in this context had offended the Kingdom, particularly in view of the excellent relations the two sides enjoyed since many years.

The prime minister said Jordan had always respected and enforced the embargo against Iraq and had not adopted any new measures on its border with Iraq since there was no need for any fresh action.

Sharif Zeid dismissed as baseless reports in the American media that Jordan was involved in a failed coup attempt against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. Nobody would believe such stories and, in any event, Jordan, which has suffered a lot from external interference in its own affairs, does not meddle in the affairs of others, he added.

In reply to a question on Jordan's relations with other Arab countries, the prime minister said the Kingdom remained keen on Arab unity and coordination so that the Arab World could face external challenges with strength. But, he added, Jordan could not be blamed and will not accept any blame if inter-Arab relations reach "the point of no return."

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Hamas

(Continued from page 1)

Israeli authorities agreed to the expulsion of six Palestinians Israel claimed were active members of the Palestinian resistance.

The six Palestinian students told a press conference in Amman Saturday that they agreed to the expulsion decision to prevent an imminent Israeli attack on the university.

Mr. Abdul Rahim said the decision was taken to prevent bloodshed. He noted that the expulsion is not permanent and that the students will be able to return to their homeland in three years.

The ambassador said that Hamas is giving credence to Israeli claims by promoting "these lies." He said that Hamas should be calling for the return of the expelled students instead of trying to sow the seeds of a new conflict with Fateh.

"Members of Hamas were also besieged in the university and nobody said that they saw anybody carrying guns," he said.

The ambassador reiterated earlier statements by the expelled students that Israel wanted 20 Palestinians it claimed were armed and on campus. He said that Israel later admitted that no armed students were inside the university.

Hamas demanded that people responsible for reaching the compromise with Israel be held accountable and all the facts about the Al Najah stand-off revealed.

The compromise agreement was also condemned by Israeli hardliners. Likud Member of Knesset Ariel Ron Nachman was quoted by the Jerusalem Post on Sunday as saying that Israel should have punished the students.

However, both Palestinian and Israeli observers saw the compromise solution to the conflict as a shift from ideological principles to political expediency.

A news analysis published by the Jerusalem Post on Sunday said that "the pending of principles on both sides for the sake of peace has placed the Palestinian-Israeli problem on firmer political footing. (see page 4).

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AND YOU DIDN'T KISS HER?

NO!... SHE SAID NO!

YOU LITTLE FOOL! WOMEN ARE LIKE THAT! WHEN THEY SAY "NO" THEY DON'T REALLY MEAN "NO," THEY JUST PLAY HARD TO GET!

"WHEN SHE SAYS 'NO' SHE DON'T REALLY MEAN 'NO'!"

SO I PUT MY ARMS AROUND HER AND SAID, "GIVE ME A KISS" BUT SHE TURNED ME DOWN!

YOU BOOB! I TOLD YOU WHEN A WOMAN SAYS "NO" SHE DON'T MEAN "NO!"

SHE DIDN'T SAY "NO!"

SHE SAID, "NUTS!"

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GOREN BRIDGE.

WITH OMAR SHARIF
& TANNAH HIRSCH

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ICELAND WINS IN FINE STYLE

Both vulnerable. West deals.

NORTH

♠ 10 9

♥ 6 2

♦ 6 5 2

♣ Q 8 7 4 2

WEST

♠ 5 4 3

♥ A 10

♦ K 7

♣ A J 10 6 5

♠ Q 8 7 6

♥ A 8 7 5

♦ 8 3

♣ K 3

SOUTH

♠ A K 2

♥ Q J 9 4 3

♦ A Q 10 8

♣ 9

The bidding:

West	North	East	South
1 ♠	Pass	1 ♥	Pass
1 NT	Pass	Pass	Dbl
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	2 ♦
2 ♠	Pass	Pass	Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♣

Iceland surprised everyone, perhaps even itself, in crushing all opposition *en route* to a convincing win in the recent world team championship for the Bermuda Bowl, held in Yokohama, Japan. In the process they produced a smoother play, perhaps the first demonstrated in world championship competition, with the lowest trump ruff ever.

South, Thoralfur Jonsson, was frozen out of the first round of the auction, despite holding the best hand at the table, because East picked off his long ace. When the opponents settled in one no trump, South reopened with a double and then competed with two diamonds.

West's spade lead was helpful, for dummy was hardly a thing of beau-

ty. The jack was covered by the queen and won in hand. The heart

jack was taken by West, and declarer won the spade continuation in hand, then entered dummy with a spade to lead a heart. East rose with the king, cashed the king of clubs, then led the 13th spade. Declarer ruffed and West chose not to over-ruff. West ruffed the queen of hearts and led the ace of clubs. Declarer ruffed and cashed the ace of diamonds to bring about this position:

NORTH

♠ ♥

♦ 6 5

♣ Q

WEST

♠ ♥

♦ K

♣ 8 4

♠ J 10

EAST

♠ ♥

♦ A

♣ 8 4

SOUTH

♠ ♥

♦ 9 4

♣ Q

♠ ♥

When declarer now led the nine of hearts, West was forced to ruff or else dummy would ruff and a club back would allow declarer to score the queen of trumps. The table's last club was discarded. West's forced club return allowed declarer to ruff in dummy. If East overrudded, so would declarer and dummy's six of trumps would score the last trick. If East discarded, so would declarer and the queen of diamonds would be the fulfilling trick.

JUMBLE

by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

Unscramble the four Jumble letters to form one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PITED

MUPLE

YATUBE

TOSFRY

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer: "BOGUS CYNIC IMPEDE WIDEST" HIS "BIGGEST"

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's

Answer: He tried to learn how to ski, but by the time he learned how to stand, he couldn't do this—
SIT DOWN

[illegible]

Financial Markets
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

Foreign Exchange Market Summary (July 13-July 17, 1992)

AMMAN — Market participants were preoccupied during all of last week with expectations that the Bundesbank was going to tighten monetary policy. But while the initial impact of Thursday's Bundesbank's discount rate hike was somewhat muted, the dollar ended the week sharply lower against the major European currencies by an average of 2.5 per cent compared to the previous week.

While said speculation had actually emerged towards the end of the previous week, it was fuelled Monday as the refusal of the president of the Bundesbank to comment on it only served to add to its credibility. The dollar hence dropped significantly against the mark.

But the U.S. unit rebounded Tuesday on mark profit-taking. The dollar thus ended at its highest levels of the week against European currencies at 1.4855 marks and 1.9195 dollars to the pound sterling.

As the Bundesbank's "watched-for" meeting drew closer, trading started to subside Wednesday and was mainly centred on position adjustment. Market participants remained, however, widely mixed on the likely measure the Bundesbank would take to tighten German monetary policy.

While some traders were expecting a discount rate hike, many observers had ruled out the possibility of such a direct measure because of the negative implications for other EC countries, mainly the U.K. and Italy. These observers were hence expecting an indirect measure such as a tightening of the Reserve Requirements.

The Bundesbank's announcement Thursday that it was raising its discount rate, for the second time in seven months, by a 0.75 per cent had a moderate effect on the dollar which dropped against the mark by just over a quarter of a pence. The rationale being that although the Bundesbank's measure did surprise many, the fact that the majority were expecting a monetary tightening in general had already been factored into the prevailing positions and exchange rates.

But the dollar dropped sharply Friday, closing at the end of the week at its lowest levels of the week and near its all-time low of 1.4430 marks reached in Feb. 1991.

Traders commented that the U.S. currency had started to decline during European trading hours as strong rumours spread that the Bundesbank was likely to hike its Lombard rate as well shortly. Dollar sentiment was further harmed when a batch of U.S. economic reports revealed unexpectedly negative results, thus renewing expectations of another Fed interest rate cut.

According to the figures, May's Merchandise Trade Deficit had widened to \$7.38 billion, when forecasts were pointing to a drop to \$5.6 billion. The deterioration was attributed to a drop in exports. Furthermore, a monthly survey conducted by the University of Michigan showed a fall back in their index of consumer confidence by 3.3 per cent in early July to 77.1 per cent.

While dollar sentiment remains negative for the short run, observers did not rule out the possibility of a temporary dollar rebound early this week, as it appeared technically over-sold.

New York Closing Rates for Major Currencies Against the U.S. Dollar

Currency	10/7/1992 Close	17/7/1992 Close	Percent Change
Sterling Pound	1.9225	1.9510	1.46%
Deutsche Mark	1.4945	1.4593	2.41%
Swiss Franc	1.3530	1.3015	3.96%
French Franc	5.0415	4.9700	2.22%
Japanese Yen	125.18	124.38	0.64%

1-Month Per Cent Euro-Currency Interest Rates

Currency	10. 7. 1992 1-Month (%)	17. 7. 1992 1-Month (%)	10. 7. 1992 1-Year (%)	17. 7. 1992 1-Year (%)
U.S. Dollar	3.31	3.68	3.31	3.68
Sterling Pound	9.93	9.75	10.06	10.15
Deutsche Mark	9.56	9.56	9.69	9.75
Swiss Franc	8.62	9.56	8.75	8.75
French Franc	9.96	9.93	10.13	10.17
Japanese Yen	4.53	4.12	4.53	4.15

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6640	0.6660
Sterling Pound	1.2947	1.3012
Deutsche Mark	0.4551	0.4574
Swiss Franc	0.5100	0.5126
French Franc	0.1345	0.1352
Japanese Yen	0.5331	0.5358
Dutch Guilder	0.4031	0.4051
Swedish Krona	0.1251	0.1257
Italian Lira	0.0598	0.0601
Belgian Franc	0.02207	0.02218

EC, U.S. agree to curb aircraft subsidies

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States has signed an agreement with the European Community (EC) to curb subsidies to makers of large civil aircraft, ending a threat of U.S. action over subsidies to the Airbus concern.

The pact, reached in principle in Brussels on March 31, bars production subsidies to 33 per cent of development costs and requires they be repaid. It also requires public acknowledgment of state support.

Washington had long complained that subsidised Airbus, jointly owned by Germany, France, Britain and Spain, was unfairly taking sales away from U.S. makers Boeing Co. and McDonnell Douglas Corp.

Deputy U.S. Trade Representative Michael Moskowitz said the pact covered planes seating more than 100 and had the strong support of Boeing and McDonnell Douglas.

Washington had estimated that Airbus had received \$13 billion to \$26 billion in state subsidies the past 20 years. But the EC counter-claimed that American makers had got subsidies through U.S. military and space contracts.

Mr. Moskowitz said there might be some military and space "spillover," but it was very small, adding the agreement included prohibitions against such indirect subsidies.

Airbus's share of the world civil aircraft market is about 30 per cent.

Economic decline continues in Ukraine

KIEV (R) — Ukraine's economy, caught in uncertainty over the course of its reform programme, slid further into recession in the first half of 1992, according to government statistics published this weekend.

The official government newspaper, Uryadoviy Kurier said Ukraine's national income fell 15 per cent in the first half of the year from the same period last year. Industrial output was 12.3 per cent below last year's level.

The budget deficit for the first half of the year was 53 billion roubles (\$400 million), just one billion roubles below the figure approved by the parliament for the whole of 1992.

The slump in output parallels

that in neighbouring Russia, where industrial production is 13 per cent below 1991 levels.

The Ukrainian newspaper said food production had fallen by 30 per cent, an alarming situation in a country which used to be the grain and bread basket of the whole Soviet Union.

Output in another key sector of the Ukrainian economy — engineering — was 12 per cent below last year's level.

Ukraine has steered an uncertain path towards economic reform this year amid criticism from the West that it was moving too slowly to dismantle the old communist system of central planning and state control.

President Leonid Kravchuk

reinforced this view earlier this month when he sacked reformist economics minister Vladimir Lanavoy, replacing him with a career communist party official.

Harvard University economist Greta Bull, in Kiev to help work out a reform programme, predicted the economic situation would worsen further in the wake of the move.

"The Ukrainian government is trying to do what (former Soviet leader Mikhail) Gorbachev failed to do — create a system of market communism," Ms. Bull said.

The data published in the newspaper indicates that the Ukrainian food and agriculture sector could face problems this

year, despite expectations of a grain harvest of 40 million tonnes, slightly above last year's 38 million.

Government officials said Ukraine needed 17 million tonnes of grain each year for its food industry and to produce fodder. But state procurements last year totalled only 14.2 million tonnes because farmers had been reluctant to sell grain to the state at low, fixed prices.

This meant the government had been forced to spend \$36 million in 1991 to import grain and oilseeds, the officials said.

The Ukrainian opposition has for months been blaming Mr. Kravchuk for what it called the slow pace of economic reforms.

World Bank urges Egypt to do more on economy

CAIRO (R) — Egypt has a unique opportunity to reap early benefits of an economic adjustment programme if it accelerates the pace of reforms proposed by the IMF and World Bank, a senior World Bank official said Saturday.

Spiros Voyatzis, chief of the bank's Middle East division, told reporters former Soviet republics would soon join the bank and compete with current members for some of its resources.

"By September this year, the membership of the World Bank will be increased by another 15 countries ... If Egypt does not move fast, it is only one cake that is provided and that cake may be given to other countries," he said.

Cairo agreed a wide-ranging three-year economic reform programme last May in return for loans from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and over \$10 billion of debt forgiveness from Western creditors.

But Western economists have voiced concern that early successes could prompt the government to slow down the pace of economic reform.

Mr. Voyatzis said Egypt had met the agreed timetable but the two international bodies like to see an acceleration of public sector reforms to ensure that private investment increased.

"Egypt is doing the right things in all areas. Egypt is moving in the right direction but what I think is that Egypt should do much more than what it is doing now," he said.

Mr. Voyatzis said the Egyptian programme had achieved better results than anticipated, but he identified the areas where more work was needed as privatisation of the huge and largely subsidised public sector, trade and price liberalisation, and encouraging private investors.

Inflation in Egypt's cities dropped for the fourth successive month to 16.3 per cent in May, an official report has said.

Inflation rose to a peak of 26.1 per cent in January as the government removed subsidies on many basic items in line with an economic reform programme approved by the IMF. But since then, it has been falling.

The Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS) report received by Reuters said the cost of food and beverages rose by 17.0 per cent in the year to May; rent, power and fuel by 26.1 per cent and medical care by 26.0 per cent.

Transportation rose by 1.3 per cent and furniture and services by 11.2 per cent, CAPMAS said.

In a separate dispatch, the Jeddah-based Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has lent Egypt \$12 million to finance imports of scrap iron, an IDB statement said. The bank has given Egypt credits worth \$34.5 million since last July.

Air Afrique opens door to investor

ABIDJAN (R) — Air Afrique, the airline owned by 11 French-speaking African countries, has announced it was opening its capital to new investors. But member states would retain at least 51 per cent, it said in a statement released by headquarters in Abidjan. The statement said the opening to new investors would help finance purchase of five new Airbus A310-300 jets costing \$470 million.

The statement gave priority for new shareholders to African institutional investors, like the African Development Bank (AFDB), and the Caisse Centrale de Coopération Economique, France's aid agency. Next in line were investors from member states who would be given the chance to subscribe to a public share offer. Third were private foreign investors with roots in Africa and fourth and last were Air Afrique's employees.

Brazilian president appeals for approval of fiscal reform

BRASILIA, Brazil (R) — President Fernando Collor de Mello has appealed to Brazilians to support a sweeping plan to balance the budget, saying it was vital to Brazil's economic recovery.

The plan, aimed at overhauling the creaking tax system and slashing spending to end a decade of crippling public deficits, is being submitted to congress for approval.

It would simplify the tax system by reducing the present 22 taxes to nine, get tough on tax evasion, incorporate the informal market into the economy and alleviate the tax burden on the lower classes, Mr. Collor said in a televised address.

"The essence of the problem is simple: A few pay and they pay too much in taxes."

Of the 61 million who make up Brazil's force, only seven million pay tax. Among the more than two million businesses that pay income tax in Brazil, 55,000 account for 80 per cent of total receipts, he said.

"With the reform we will create a situation where all pay so that each one of us pays less," he affirmed.

The plan would also lower taxes on production to stimulate output



Fernando Collor de Mello and investment.

The plan modifies the social security system, ends civil servants' right to a job for life and harmonises their pension benefits with those of the private sector.

Without fiscal reform the government cannot fight inflation of 22 per cent a month," Mr. Collor said.

Ary Oswaldo Mattos Filho, government coordinator for the reform, estimated that under the plan the state would increase revenue by around \$20 billion or five per cent of GNP.

The plan, while strongly supported by Brazil's business community, faces stiff opposition in congress.

Chad unveils plan to slash government costs

N'DJAMENA (R) — The government of impoverished Chad, already at loggerheads with unions over unpaid wages, has unveiled a sweeping plan to slash costs by cutting state staff and pay.

Announcing the plan on national radio, Information Minister Djiddi Bichara said immediate moves would include pay cuts of between 10 and 20 per cent for civil servants, depending on their salary.

Allowances for top civil servants and government members would be slashed by up to 50 per cent, taxes raised, recruitment halted and personnel cut in all departments, including a 10 per cent reduction in staff at each

ministry.

The economy of the central African country has been crippled by years of civil war, smuggling and low prices for its main export crop, cotton.

Government workers staged a seven-day strike last week to complain at salary arrears. Workers in the capital have not been paid for three months, and in the provinces they are owed six months' wages.

Mr. Bichara warned the government would do all it could to scupper another indefinite strike threatened by unions from Monday. "This strike will not be tolerated and the government will take all steps to assure work goes ahead," he said.

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Botha: ANC mass action threatens U.N. efforts

JOHANNESBURG (R) — South Africa's white-minority government said Sunday the African National Congress campaign of strikes, boycotts and demonstrations threatened U.N. efforts to halt bloodshed and promote democracy talks.

Foreign Minister P. W. Botha, speaking after a scathing personal attack by Zulu leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi on ANC President Nelson Mandela, said U.N. envoy Cyrus Vance was coming to help find common ground among the main players.

"If the ANC continues with its campaign of mass action in a way that causes disruption, it will be in direct contravention of the U.N. resolution on South Africa," he told reporters.

"It will frustrate efforts to resolve our differences."

Mr. Vance, appointed after a Security Council debate to probe black factional violence and recommend steps to restart talks on a multi-racial constitution, arrives in South Africa Tuesday.

"His mandate is open. He is not coming to write the constitution or to curb violence. I hope he

will meet the widest possible spectrum of South Africans," Mr. Botha said.

But political analysts say Mr. Vance, a former U.S. secretary of state, will have to confront a widening political gap between the major players — Mandela, Inkatha Freedom Party President Buthelezi and South Africa's white reformist President F. W. de Klerk.

Clashes between supporters of Mr. Mandela and Mr. Buthelezi, South Africa's two most powerful black leaders, have taken 6,000 lives in the past two years and form the main obstacle to restarting deadlocked democracy talks aimed at ending white rule.

"The gap is widening by day. Buthelezi is attacking Mandela, Mandela is attacking de Klerk and Buthelezi and vice versa. Their supporters are doing the same," said political science lecturer Lindwe Manona.

"Mr. Vance has a huge task awaiting him to reconcile these three heavyweights who are married to divergent views and continue apportioning blame on the political impasse," she said.

Mr. Buthelezi, in his most stinging attack on Mr. Mandela to date, accused him Saturday of telling "foulmouthed" lies for political gain. He was reacting to a speech to the Security Council in which Mr. Mandela presented the ANC as a victim of violence orchestrated by the government and Inkatha.

The Zulu leader called on his followers to form defence committees to protect themselves from "inevitable" violence during the campaign of mass action launched by the ANC to force the pace of progress towards black majority rule.

"No matter how strongly Buthelezi feels about the ANC walking out democracy talks and embarking on mass action, the simple truth is that such warfare statements are unacceptable in the present political climate," said black newspaper, City Press.

"We plead with Chief Buthelezi to cool it."

The South African Coordinating Committee on Labour Affairs (SACCOLA), a body representing 10 major employers, and the Congress of South African Trade



Pik Botha

Union (COSATU), a labour federation representing more than 1.3 million workers, have drawn a peace charter to help restart stalled negotiations.

The charter for peace, democracy and reconstruction commits both parties to help curb political violence, combat poverty and intervene and mediate in industrial conflicts. It also suggests steps to put constitutional negotiations back on track.

While the document has been negotiated by big business and labour, sources said it would be signed by political and other public organisations.

Another top Italian politician linked to scandal

ROME (R) — Magistrates investigating a huge corruption scandal have shaken the leadership of Italy's dominant Christian Democrats by linking the party's Deputy Secretary Silvio Lega to their inquiry.

Mr. Lega, a leading candidate for the senior job of the Christian Democrats' national secretary, said magistrates had told him Saturday that he was suspected of taking proceeds from bribery payments in Italy's business capital, Milan.

"I am absolutely tranquil and at the disposal of magistrates. The important thing is that the truth emerge without any ambiguities and quickly, to prevent exploitation," the 47-year-old Lega, a member of parliament from northern Turin, told reporters.

Milan investigators probing a city-hall kickback scandal, which has so far led to the arrest of over 60 businessmen and politicians, said Mr. Lega was suspected of violating laws on the financing of political parties.

The magistrates' warning sowed yet more confusion in the top ranks of Italy's biggest party, which has been in disarray since its National Secretary Amadeo Forlani resigned after the Christian Democrats sank to a record low in April general polls.

Former Interior Minister Antonio Gava, leader of a mainstream current in the Christian Democrats, had endorsed Mr. Lega as the best man to take over from Mr. Forlani and overhaul the party after a large protest vote in the polls hit all main parties.

Mr. Lega's tying to the scandal was expected to send the fraught search for a successor to Mr. Forlani back to square one.

Magistrates are expected to request the Chamber of Deputies (lower house) vote to lift Mr. Lega's parliamentary immunity to allow their investigations to go ahead, judicial sources said.

Bonn presses for wider military role

BONN (R) — German Defence Minister Volker Ruehe, under opposition attack for sending a warship to join a Western force patrolling the Yugoslav coast, pressed Bonn's case Sunday for a wider military role.

Mr. Ruehe said German troops should join U.N. peacekeeping forces for the first time next year and prepare for international combat missions with allies in the years ahead.

"We want to be able to react the way our democratic European neighbours do," Mr. Ruehe told the magazine Der Spiegel in an interview released ahead of publication Monday.

Mr. Ruehe defended Bonn's decision last week to deploy a German destroyer with Western allies monitoring U.N. sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro.

"All NATO states wanted us not to withdraw the destroyer Bayern... without this minimum of participation, we would have isolated ourselves," he said.

The opposition Social Democrats (SPD) are threatening to challenge the deployment in constitutional court, arguing it violates a constitutional clause long seen in Bonn as limiting troops to defence of NATO territory.

The SPD has also called parliament back from holidays for a debate Wednesday over what it sees as Bonn's gradual move to a wider military role since German unity in 1990.

Mr. Ruehe is leading Chancellor Helmut Kohl's drive to win

opposition support for a new military policy allowing German troops to fight abroad alongside the United Nations or NATO.

"We have to be prepared with others to restore international law. Anything else would be a negative position and a step backwards alone," Mr. Ruehe told Spiegel.

Mr. Kohl has said a constitutional change is needed to permit German forces to go beyond NATO borders, even on "blue helmet" peacekeeping tours for the United Nations.

But Bonn is deadlocked with the SPD, whose support is needed for a two-thirds vote in parliament to amend the constitution. The SPD, citing Germany's bloody past, wants any wider military role strictly limited to peacekeepers.

Mr. Ruehe said he was already looking for a U.N. peacekeeping mission for German troops to join next year.

"The international community has a right to demand that of us," he said.

He ruled out Cambodia, where Germany has sent army medics but no troops to aid U.N. peacekeepers, as too dangerous.

Mr. Ruehe said Germany's armed forces and the public needed time to adjust to a wider military role after following a strict defence-only policy since World War II.

"I am not at all in a hurry. I maintain that we are not prepared at the moment" either materially or psychologically, for combat missions" he said.

Romanian party names ex-king for president

BUCHAREST (AP) — The main opposition party has said that it was nominating former King Michael, deposed by Communists in 1947, to run for president in September.

Radu Campeanu, leader of the National Liberal Party, said a party delegation would make its proposal next week in Geneva, where King Michael has lived for 30 years. No reaction was im-

mediately available from the former monarch.

Mr. Campeanu told the Associated Press that nominating Michael "was the best way of removing (President Ion) Iliescu from power... I don't think Michael can be defeated by Iliescu."

Parliamentary and presidential elections are scheduled for Sept. 27.

EC ministers to focus on safer issues

BRUSSELS (R) — European Community foreign ministers will hug the safe ground of world affairs when they meet Monday to avoid any arguments while their own Maastricht Treaty's future hangs in the balance, diplomats say.

The formal agenda does include domestic topics that have caused friction before, such as EC finances, but officials say ministers will glide over these issues.

"We hope there won't be any posturing (over internal matters) that could lead to wrangling," said one ambassador.

The meeting will discuss Yugoslavia, Turkey, the former Soviet states, the Middle East peace process, relations with ASEAN states and moves to admit Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland as Community members.

The ministers, meeting only hours after the start of a new EC-brokered ceasefire in Bosnia-Herzegovina, will hear a report from their new chairman, British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, on his tour of what was Yugoslavia.

Diplomats do not rule out moves to enlarge the naval force of a dozen NATO and Western European Union (WEU) warships deployed in the Adriatic last week to prevent maritime violations of a U.N. trade embargo against Serbia.

The ministers will also hear a

proposal from Britain, which took over the rotating EC presidency on July 1, for a summit with the leaders of Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland.

The format favoured by London for such a meeting, possibly in late October, would entrust the EC's representation to British Prime Minister John Major and European Commission President Jacques Delors.

This would make it similar to regular EC summit with the United States and Japan — a strong political signal to the three East European reformers that although they cannot expect to EC membership soon, they are being taken seriously as partners in the new post-cold war Europe.

A more muted signal will be conveyed to Turkey — whose membership request has effectively been shelved by the EC — when ministers study a British paper on relations with Ankara.

Diplomats quote the paper as saying that Turkey's strategic importance has grown as conflicts in the former Communist bloc replace the cold war as a threat to peace.

London argues that the EC must strengthen its economic and political links with Ankara, and is expected to push to unblock a financial pact long stalled by EC member Greece because of Athens' dispute with Turkey over Cyprus.

The EC ministers are likely to

spend little time on the procedure for admitting front-line applicants from the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

The EC's Lisbon summit last month decided that formal accession talks must wait until a budget row pitting poor states against their rich partners is settled and until the Maastricht Treaty on political and monetary union is ratified by all.

With the treaty's future in doubt since Danish voters' "no" in June, negotiations to enlarge the EC are unlikely to start before January.

London is expected to say, however, that it wants ministers to assess the executive European Commission's view on Austria, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland in October.

Preparations for a meeting later this month in Manila with ASEAN, the Association of South-East Asian Nations, will run into objections from Portugal because of Indonesia's will treatment of protesters in the former Portuguese colony of East Timor.

Portuguese Foreign Minister Jose De Deus Pinheiro said Friday Lisbon would block a new EC cooperation accord with ASEAN unless Jakarta improved its human rights record.

His Dutch colleague Hans Van Den Broek said during a weekend visit to Jakarta, however, that the EC would not become embroiled in the dispute between Portugal and Indonesia.

Greens face lonely battle in Japan

KOBE, Japan (R) — Environmentalist Yoshio Koga has neither the money, the candidates, nor the energy to run again in Japanese national elections.

After two previous tiffs at winning parliamentary seats, the 84-year-old head of Japan's first environmental party is sitting out next Sunday's upper house polls.

Neither Mr. Koga nor other candidates of the Japan Green

Party has ever won a single seat. The same goes for Japan's other "green" parties, some of them obscure and not much related to the environment at all.

Mr. Koga insists his movement's success or failure should not be judged by elections.

"We're basically against parliament," the slight old man told Reuters in an interview in Kobe, western Japan.

Japan's first Green Party was formed in 1987 with a membership of about 100. That is still roughly the total today.

Over the intervening decade, the already "mighty national economy" has "edged ever greater heights, raising growing concern abroad about the environmental toll this all-out expansion was taking both at home and in countries where Japan obtains its raw materials.

Humiliated Russians rage against fate in Estonia

NARVA, Estonia (R) — Russians who lodged it over other nationalities in the Soviet era bitterly resent their humiliating status as a racial minority in newly independent Estonia.

"It used to be paradise for us here," Andrei, a young Russian lorry driver, said despondently as he surveyed the drab town of Narva on the border with post-Soviet Russia.

"Now it's better to be an Eskimo than a Russian."

Fears of all-out confrontation dragging in the new Russian government are growing as racial tensions worsen. Elsewhere in the ex-Soviet Union, clashes between ethnic Russians and Moldovans in the Dnestr Valley have claimed hundreds of lives.

"I cannot rule out the development of a Dnestr-like situation here," said Russian army General Zia Abdurakhmanov, based in Estonia.

Moscow is furious that Estonia's new constitution denies automatic citizenship to settlers from the Soviet era who are mostly Russians and who make up a third of the population.

A Russian army of 20,000 men has not left to Estonia's rage. Estonians are forming paramilitary groups and a national army. Disgruntled groups on both sides want to redraw the country's borders to suit their own claims.

The flashpoint could be this city overlooking the Narva River and the vast expanse of mother Russia beyond. Over 90 per cent of its people are Russian settlers who arrived after Estonia became part of the Soviet Union in 1940.

If they want to play for citizenship — next year, after September elections and key reforms including handing out privatised property — they will have to prove they have lived in Estonia for at least two years and can speak the language, akin to Finnish. Most settlers never bothered to learn.

Less than 10 per cent of us have the right to vote. The rest of us are sitting here with no official voice. No one listens to us. That is the tragedy of this city," said Aleksei Paut, editor of Narva's Russian-language local paper.

China says Spratly oil deal will go ahead

PEKING (R) — China will ignore Vietnamese protests and implement a new oil exploration pact near the disputed Spratly Islands, saying the move will "reclaim" the area.

An official magazine said Sunday. A senior Chinese oil company executive said Peking knew Hanoi would respond angrily to its agreement with Crestone Energy Corp of the United States, but was willing to risk a dispute to push its territorial claims.

"It is our territory. And our agreement is legally valid," Wang Yan, vice president of the China National Offshore Oil Corp (CNOOC), was quoted as saying in the July 20 edition of the official Peking Review, issued Sunday.

Ties between Peking and Hanoi, normalised only last year after more than a decade of tension, have come under strain since CNOOC and Crestone agreed on May 8 to explore for petroleum in a 25,000-square kilometre region of the South China Sea off Vietnam's coast.

Vietnam, which also claims the area, denounced the pact as a violation of its sovereign rights over its continental shelf.

The Peking Review said China's Foreign Ministry knew the project would take place on Vietnam's continental shelf, but was willing to go ahead anyway.

It quoted ministry sources as saying China based its claim to the exploration area, dubbed WAB-21, on historical documents dating back to the Song Dynasty (960-1279 AD) illustrating Chinese control over the Spratlys.

"It is a fundamental principle of international law that territorial rights create related marine rights, but not the reverse," the magazine said.

"Hence, Chinese sovereignty over the islands, including the ones in the WAB-21 area, is unquestionable even though the area is situated on the continental shelf of another country," it said.

Mr. Wang said the oil pact would help to underline Peking's control of the Spratlys and adjacent waters — a huge stretch of sea stretching as far south as Borneo.

The islands are also claimed all or in part by Vietnam, Taiwan, the Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei. All except Brunei have troops stationed in the area.

"The Sino-U.S. contract seems to mean a Chinese reclaim of the isles. So the Vietnamese responses were all to be expected," Mr. Wang was quoted as saying.

China and Vietnam, which fought a border war in 1979, clashed over the Spratlys in 1988 in a brief sea skirmish that left three Vietnamese dead and 70 missing.

Historians: Was Goebbels writing fact or fiction?

LONDON (AP) — Is it new? Is it true? After three published excerpts from diaries of Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels, historians still aren't sure.

"The things which were blank are still blank," said Professor Donald Cameron Watt of the London School of Economics. But he said a final verdict will have to wait for several years until the full texts are published.

The diaries — discovered in Moscow's central archive — have not added any new insights to Hitler's 1934 purge of political rivals or the 1942 conference that promoted the holocaust.

According to historian Dan Van Der Vat, the diaries "have not passed the 'so what?' test."

Britain's Sunday Times and Daily Mail and Germany's Der Spiegel have carried excerpts from the diaries.

Dr. Anthony Glees, director of European studies at Brunel University, who translated the diaries for the Daily Mail, said they did provide "significant new evidence" on two key events.

The diaries indicate Hitler was sure Britain would not go to war in 1938 when "mandated" handover of Czechoslovakia, Dr. Glees said.

They also reveal that after German generals failed in 1944 to kill Hitler, Goebbels believed he should become the real ruler of Germany with Hitler taking on an elder statesman's role, he said.

No sign of freedom for Burma's Nobel laureate

BANGKOK (R) — Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi completes her third year under house arrest Sunday with no sign from Burma's ruling junta that it plans to release her.

The former housewife and academic who emerged to head Burma's opposition during an abortive national uprising for democracy in 1988 was detained on July 20, 1989 for alleged subversion after garnering massive popular support.

She has never been formally charged.

The junta that came to power after troops crushed the uprising began releasing some political prisoners in April, but it has ignored international calls that it free Aung San Suu Kyi.

The pressure intensified after the Nobel Committee in Norway awarded her its 1991 Nobel Peace Prize for her courage in standing up to what it called "a regime characterised by brutality."

The junta has said it free all political detainees not considered a threat to state security, but has made clear it considers Aung San Suu Kyi just such a threat.

The daughter of Burma's foremost national hero, Aung San, who led the country to the brink of independence before his assassination in 1947 at the age of 32, Aung San Suu Kyi has herself become a martyr figure to many Burmese.

Now 47, she headed the National League for Democracy (NLD), Burma's largest opposition group. Despite her detention

the party won a landslide victory in a May 1990 general election, but the junta refused to let it govern and instead arrested its main leaders, who are still in jail.

After the junta replaced its ailing hardline leader General Saw Maung with General Than Shwe in April, it allowed Aung San Suu Kyi's British husband Michael Aris and their two sons to visit her for the first time in more than two years.

Diplomats believe the junta hoped her family would persuade her to leave Burma and renounce politics, the terms it has set for her release.

Mr. Aris said after his visit that his wife had no intention of agreeing to such conditions.

"The offer was repeatedly made to release her if she went into exile. She never even discussed the matter because she says it is not negotiable," he said.

"Since the day she began her endeavours, she resolved to stay and see it through come what may," he said.

Mr. Aris said his wife was frail but fit. She spends her time reading, listening to the radio and meditating.

When she was first detained she staged a 12-day hunger strike to demand humane treatment for supporters arrested at the same time.

In May, she made her first public statement since her arrest in which she called for national reconciliation going beyond "token gestures of appeasement."

Column

Romance makes welcome return to U.K. royal family

WINDSOR, England (R) — Romance made a welcome return to Britain's royal family with the wedding of one of Queen Elizabeth's cousins and a public kiss for Princess Diana from her husband Charles. The royals put aside their conjugal troubles and turned out in force for the wedding of the elegant Lady Helen Windsor to art dealer Tim Taylor at the royal residence of Windsor Castle. The mood seemed to be catching. Heir to the throne Prince Charles was glimpsed giving his wife Diana a peck on the cheek after the service, a surprise gesture between a couple widely rumoured to have fallen out of love. Lady Helen, 21st in line to the throne, was a chic royal bride in a simple designer gown of white silk and a diamond tiara crowning her upswep blonde hair and long veil. The occasion, blessed by sunny weather, had all that was needed to put a happy royal story of an "English rose" bride on the front pages after weeks of dark speculation that the marriage of Charles and Diana could be winding up. Since Lady Helen announced her engagement in January, the monarchy has been rocked by the divorce of Princess Anne, the separation of Prince Andrew and the former Sarah "Fergie" Ferguson, and a controversial biography of Princess Diana portraying her marriage as an icy partnership.

U.K. apologises to U.S. lawyer over search

LONDON (AP) — The British government has apologised to a U.S. lawyer who complained of a humiliating search and interrogation by customs officials at London's Heathrow Airport, the Sunday Times said. Paymaster General Sir John Cope had written to Margaret Jackson, who is black, to express his regret for "the distress" suffered, it said. No one was immediately available from the Home Office to comment. Ms. Jackson, 38, a former parking violations judge-trainee from New York, had complained to the Home Office that she was insulted and humiliated by customs officers who suspected her of being a drug smuggler. She said she was singled out for a body search and three hours of questioning because of her colour. Ms. Jackson came to London to speak at a legal conference sponsored by the British Society of Black Lawyers and the American Bar Association. Mr. Cope told the House of Commons on July 10 that Ms. Jackson arrived "on a flight which is considered by customs to be in a high risk category for drug smuggling."

Robber disguises himself as Batman

INDEPENDENCE (AP) — A man dressed as caped crime fighter Batman pulled a pistol on a convenience store clerk and demanded all of the money in the cash register, police said. A customer said the robber took the undisclosed amount and fled the Service Oil Co. store on foot, his cape flapping behind. "We don't know where he is," police Sgt. Al Hainen said. "Batmobile, bat cave, we just don't know." Independence is a Kansas City suburb.

Safe sex — but at a price

BARCELONA (R) — Competitors will have to pay for Olympic condoms at the Barcelona Games. There are 23 condom machines — including one in the discotheque — at the seafloor village which will house more than 14,000 athletes and officials. Village bed and board is free for the first time but unlike previous games there is a charge for condoms — available only in green. They cost 100 pesetas (\$1) for a pack of three. Organisers have ordered 50,000 packs.

Woman electrocutes teenage burglar

BANGKOK (R) — An elderly woman, fed up with a rash of burglaries at her home, set a trap with a live power cable and electrocuted a teenage trespasser. Thailand's largest-circulation newspaper reported. Malce Rabsiri, 64, told police she strung up the live wire below a hole in the roof of her house, in Ratchaburi province, which burglars had used before to get in. Thai Rath reported. A 15-year-old boy climbed through the hole and was killed instantly when he touched the wire, the paper quoted police as saying.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

From the society of BCCI depositors
The chairman of the society of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International (BCCI) depositors will be in Amman during the period July 22-25, 1992.
Those concerned, please call tel. 827620 to set the time and place of an appointment.
Only concerned persons are asked to contact. Thanks.